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education appointments

news

The Howard machine blows its circuits

Sometimes, when Mr Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, stands at the dispatch box, it seems that the skin and bone of his head have become a translucent shell, through which it is possible to observe and to admire the intricate workings of his political mind.

Here – beside the left frontal lobe – is his populist receptor, keenly attuned to the minutest barometric change in the electorate's air pressure. Attached to the cortex is a titeter, measuring what his colleagues will and will not wear. Between them run a series of electrical currents, along synaptic paths,



DAVID AARONOVITCH

ways, testing this position or that proposal and computing their outcomes.

But never has this superb machine been placed under so much strain as this week on the subject of Dunblane and guns. And yesterday the whirring and

clanking was audible throughout the Chamber, as Mr Howard struggled with the contradictions of his position.

His is, as he always reminds us, the Party of law and order. But it is also the Party of shooters – who cannot see why their enjoyment should be curtailed because of the actions of a few. It is the Party of toughness on criminals, but also the freedom of the individual. It is the Party of prisons, but also the Party that loathes the nanny-state. Ever since Labour dispensed with the Wait-for-Cullen absurdity, Mr Howard has been aware from the public response

that the libertarian view was going to lose out. So he had to come to the House with a "tough" plan of action, hoping that not too many would ask the obvious question: if guns are so awful, what exactly was the government doing between Hungerford and Dunblane?

But the proposals also had to give something to what is called "the shooting fraternity". Thus did Mr Howard balk at a complete ban on 22 weapons, quoting Cullen as saying they were "four to six times less powerful", and could be kept at secure gun clubs. His statement ended up with some vintage hypocrisy: "I

urge the parties opposite to support that Bill. The country expects nothing less".

Jack Straw, his opposite number, had only been allowed to see the Cullen report and the Home Secretary's statement a paltry three or four hours before Mr Howard stood up in the House to make it. Nevertheless Straw's position had, for once, the immense strength of consistency and he spoke well. Ban the lot, he said.

Ah, replied Mr Howard, the synaptic canals pulsing, there we have it, the difference between us and Labour. "We believe it is possible to give the public protection without the need for a total prohibition".

Immediately, the Howard plan began to come apart in front of our eyes. David Mellor put his finger on part of it. If it was going to be made so incredibly difficult to exercise a legitimate right to shoot handguns, then why not ban them altogether?

The nation's busy sea and air ports, its hub position on international trade routes and the fact that police, customs and other government agencies are only just starting to get to grips with the problems have given Britain the role. Banned substances including ozone-depleting CFC chemicals and parts from endangered wildlife pass through. Police raids in UK cities have demonstrated that large quantities of medicines purporting to contain extracts from endangered species such as tigers and bears are entering Britain for sale here but much is thought to be for sale abroad.

significant shorts

Britain 'hub of environmental crime-wave'

Britain has become a key staging post in an expanding international environmental crime-wave, the country's first seminar on the subject heard yesterday.

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John Gummer, Secretary of State for the Environment, told a Chinese journalist at the seminar that the British government had no quarrel with Oriental medicine. But he claimed that endangered wildlife parts were only used as aphrodisiacs, although tiger parts are said to have many beneficial effects.

Nicholas Schoon

Parents' advice brings big fall in cot deaths

Fewer infants are dying in England and Wales because parents are now heeding advice to prevent cot deaths, experts say.

Government statistics show the lowest-recorded infant mortality rate ever. Since 1971, the rate has fallen by 65 per cent, from 17.5 per thousand live births to 6.1 in 1995.

Ralph Settatree, Clinical Director for the Confidential Inquiry into Stillbirths and Deaths in Infancy, a government-funded research group, advised parents to make sure babies sleep on their backs and not their sides or front.

Stores warned on 'fresh' bread

Frozen bread cannot be considered fresh, trading standards officers said. They are to issue new guidelines next month on the way supermarkets must describe their bread baked in-store.

The Local Authority Coordinating Body on Trading Standards is worried that consumers could be misled into thinking that all such loaves "fresh-baked", "oven-fresh", "freshly baked here today" are prepared from beginning to end on the premises.

An officials suggested some supermarkets were misleading their customers.

New hospital dooms Bart's

Supporters of St Bartholomew's, the famed 900-year-old hospital in the City of London, yesterday vowed to fight on as plans were unveiled for a new hospital nearby which will mean its almost certain closure.

The £300m, 1,100-bed development, on the site of the present Royal London Hospital NHS Trust in Whitechapel, will be the biggest Private Finance Initiative hospital project in the health service to date.

A cash injection of £200m is needed to save the health service from a winter crisis, according to a review of health authorities and trusts which confirms doctors' warnings of severe financial problems.

The National Association of Health Authorities and Trusts says the NHS is "pulling out all the stops" to ensure that emergency and intensive care services are ready for the winter surge in demand but that this is being done at a cost.

Non-urgent treatments are being restricted or cancelled and waiting lists will grow, according to the NAFAT report, while debt is eating into next year's resources.

Le Hunt

Unspoilt pubs

Up to 1,000 pubs have unspoilt interiors of architectural or historical importance which deserve protection, the Campaign for Real Ale said.

Its *Good Beer Guide 1997*, published yesterday, lists 197 with interiors of outstanding heritage value.

Stephen Goodwin

Labour warns against curb on sleaze inquiry

Anthony Bevins and John Rentoul

The Commons was warned last night that Labour would not tolerate any attempt to obstruct an all-party investigation into a whip's interference with a 1994 inquiry into the Neil Hamilton affair.

Acting on an allegation that David Willetts, a Treasury minister and former whip, had improperly given advice that could have blocked an investigation into allegations that Mr Hamilton had received cash payments, the Commons last night agreed to open an investigation into the conduct of Mr Willetts.

But Ann Taylor, shadow Leader of the House and a member of the investigating Standards and Privileges Committee, warned the House that Labour would not let the new investigation get bogged down for lack of evidence.

She told MPs: "I hope that those who may be called to give evidence, or to provide documentation, will also be aware of

their responsibilities to this House, and that everything the committee needs will be forthcoming."

Mrs Taylor then added: "Unless that is the case, then these matters will not be resolved. I trust, therefore, that everyone will co-operate fully."

Labour clearly fears an operation of Government-inspired foot-dragging, in the possible hope that the inquiry will get bogged down – and even slip beyond a May election.

Moving the motion for a formal complaint of breach of parliamentary privilege to be investigated, Labour MP Andrew Miller said it was not for whips to meddle in the quasi-judicial investigation of a select committee.

He said an open, public inquiry, and firm action, was required to restore public faith in Parliament.

Alf Morris, a former Labour member of the old Privileges Committee, intervened to say that junior whips like Mr Willetts did not operate as soloists;

they were "choreographed" by more senior colleagues like the Chief Whip.

Tony Benn told the House that if it was a corrupt practice for an election candidate to offer a voter a £1,000 inducement to vote, it should also be an election offence for an MP to accept £1,000 to ask a question.

Meanwhile, Sir Gordon Downey, the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards, has opened his investigation into the original – and buried – allegations about Mr Hamilton accepting cash payments from Mohamed Al Fayed, the owner of Harrods.

Sir Gordon has so far investigated four allegations that MPs broke the ethical rules of the Commons, with at least three now outstanding.

Meanwhile, Doug Hoyle, the Labour MP whose local party received a donation from the lobbyist Ian Greer, announced yesterday he was resigning from the Commons committee investigating the cash-for-questions affair.

Royal train faces axe

Christian Wolmar
Transport Correspondent

The Royal Train looks set to follow the Royal Yacht into oblivion after the Government announced yesterday that it was changing the way Royal travel is to be funded.

The Royal Family will in future receive a single grant for transport each year, rather than having the costs of the train and the Royal Squadron met automatically by the Department of Transport and the Ministry of Defence. The members of the Royal Family will then have to decide how best to spend that money and the train is unlikely to be affordable.

Last year, the cost of their travel was more than £9m and the 31 outings cost an average of £61,290 including security expenses, a total of £1.9m for the year. It was used by the Queen, the Duke of Edinburgh, the Prince of Wales, the Princess Royal and the Duchess of Kent. With a tighter budget, they are likely to choose cheaper methods of travel, such as hiring the odd first-class carriage.

The proposal is thought to have been finalised at the recent Way Ahead Group meeting at Balmoral last month. The group, which consists of senior members of the family and advisers looks at possible reforms of the monarchy as well as planning public engagements.

The Royal Yacht *Britannia* is set to be decommissioned next year because the cost of a replacement was considered too high and the Royals are trying to shed their ostentatious image.

The new grant will come from the Department of Transport which will expect to make annual cuts to the amount. In answer to a parliamentary question, the Prime Minister, John Major, said yesterday that a similar scheme for "property services on the occupied royal palaces" provided a suitable model. This had led to "savings in excess of 25 per cent" over the past five years.

He said: "Once the new system is established, targets for savings will be agreed and performance analysed against them published [annually]."



The truth is out there: A Greenpeace protest against the intended use by Unilever of genetically manipulated soya beans in its products. The demonstration took place at the company's headquarters in London yesterday. Photograph: Araminta De Ciemont

Education vouchers scheme is forcing nurseries to shut down

Judith Judd
Education Editor

Playgroups are being forced to close by the Government's nursery voucher scheme as schools rush to admit children who are only just four.

Officials from Norfolk, one of the four councils in the pilot scheme, will next month tell the Commons Select Committee on Education about its concern that some four-year-olds are being sent to schools which are not equipped to cope with them.

As Conservative-controlled Wandsworth and Westminster yesterday presented evidence to the committee of their reser-

variations about the scheme, Michael Edwards, Norfolk's chief education officer, said the number of children attending playgroups had dropped sharply this term and six had gone out of business.

From next April parents of all four-year-olds will be given vouchers worth £1,100 to spend in private, voluntary or local authority nurseries or schools.

Mr Edwards said the mechanics of the scheme "were not unworkable" but he was worried because a growing number of young four-year-olds were being admitted to small rural schools and put in classes with children sometimes

several years older. He added: "Heads of schools have seen this as a competitive exercise because of the money involved. Where there are only

Education + The Tabloid

two or three classes in a school, there are more four-year-olds in mixed age classes and that is worrying from an educational point of view. We have tried to ensure that there is appropriate teaching but it is very difficult for teachers in small schools to cope with these children."

Playgroups – or pre-schools – say 39 schools have changed their admissions policy to admit children immediately after their fourth birthday. They fear that three-year-olds, who are not eligible for vouchers, will be unable to find pre-school places as playgroups are forced to close.

Margaret Lochrie, of the Pre-School Learning Alliance, said their survey showed that, in addition to the recent closures, a number of playgroups were struggling to survive.

Meanwhile, four-year-olds were being admitted to reception classes where the staffing and equipment were sometimes not appropriate. Nursery class-

es must have a higher pupil-teacher ratio than school reception classes.

Mrs Lochrie said: "There is rampant competition from schools. Most four-year-olds are going to end up in reception classes and that is not nursery education."

Robin Squire, the schools minister, said: "There is no financial need for state schools to expand the places they offer to four-year-olds unless they want to. Where they do decide to expand state schools, like those in the private and voluntary sector, will want to consider carefully the quality of what they offer."

fox n. cruel,
cunning, ruthless,
sly killer.

hunter n. (see
above).

In this week's Radio Times, John Peel examines the arguments for and against fox hunting and discovers there are no easy answers.

RadioTimes

IT'S NOT WHAT YOU EXPECT.

John Peel 10.15pm

Ageing pop star turns Bronte into a critical cliffhanger

David Lister
Arts News Editor

Sir Cliff Richard has donned his long black wig, grown menacing sideburns, even accidentally knocked out a fellow actor in rehearsal. But even his Heathcliff was powerless against the unpredictability of new technology.

Finally realising a dream he had nurtured for more than 30 years, Sir Cliff, 56, played Emily Bronte's brooding hero in the opening of a new musical based on *Wuthering Heights*.

But the 4,000-strong full house to see *Heathcliff* at Birmingham's indoor National Arena did not realise that the lavish show they were watching was a victim of computer error.

One-third of the sophis-

Heights and imagining him as a ruthless merchant adventurer and opium trader.

Miss Bronte had not foreseen the scope for exotic Oriental dance sequences and laser-led flights of fancy.

Before yesterday's first night of the five-month long four-city tour which has already sold 340,000 seats and taken a record £8.5m, the God-fearing Peter Pan of pop was determined to prove an affinity with English literature's most romantic and dangerous obsessive.

"Quite a lot of people said I couldn't do this," he said. "He's the nice guy singing *Living Doll*. And every morning I looked in the mirror and thought damn, I'm still Cliff Richard."

"But when I put the wig on I felt different. No, I've never been cast aside by a lover for someone else. I have nevertheless loved and felt love and lost love, wished someone would love me. All those feelings, we've all felt them."

Supervising last-minute rehearsals, the director, Frank Dunlop, said: "Cliff is a very daring person. This is his biggest risk."

And Sir Tim Rice, who composed the score with John Farrar of *Grease* fame, added: "Cliff is very misunderstood. He is an artist with lots of facets."

Outside the stage door, the fans were in no doubt of their ageing hero's suitability for the role. Barbara Byrne, from Warrington, had seen Cliff in concert 374 times and followed him round Australia, though she failed to get a ticket for this Birmingham opening. "Of course he looks the part," she said indignantly. "He looks like a man. The beard has changed him totally."

And she added with a side-swipe at those whippersnapper Oasis chappies: "Cliff doesn't throw cans of beer off the stage and spit at everybody."

Sir Cliff summed it all up modestly saying: "I've never embarked on anything like this before and I never will again. This could be the swansong of my career."

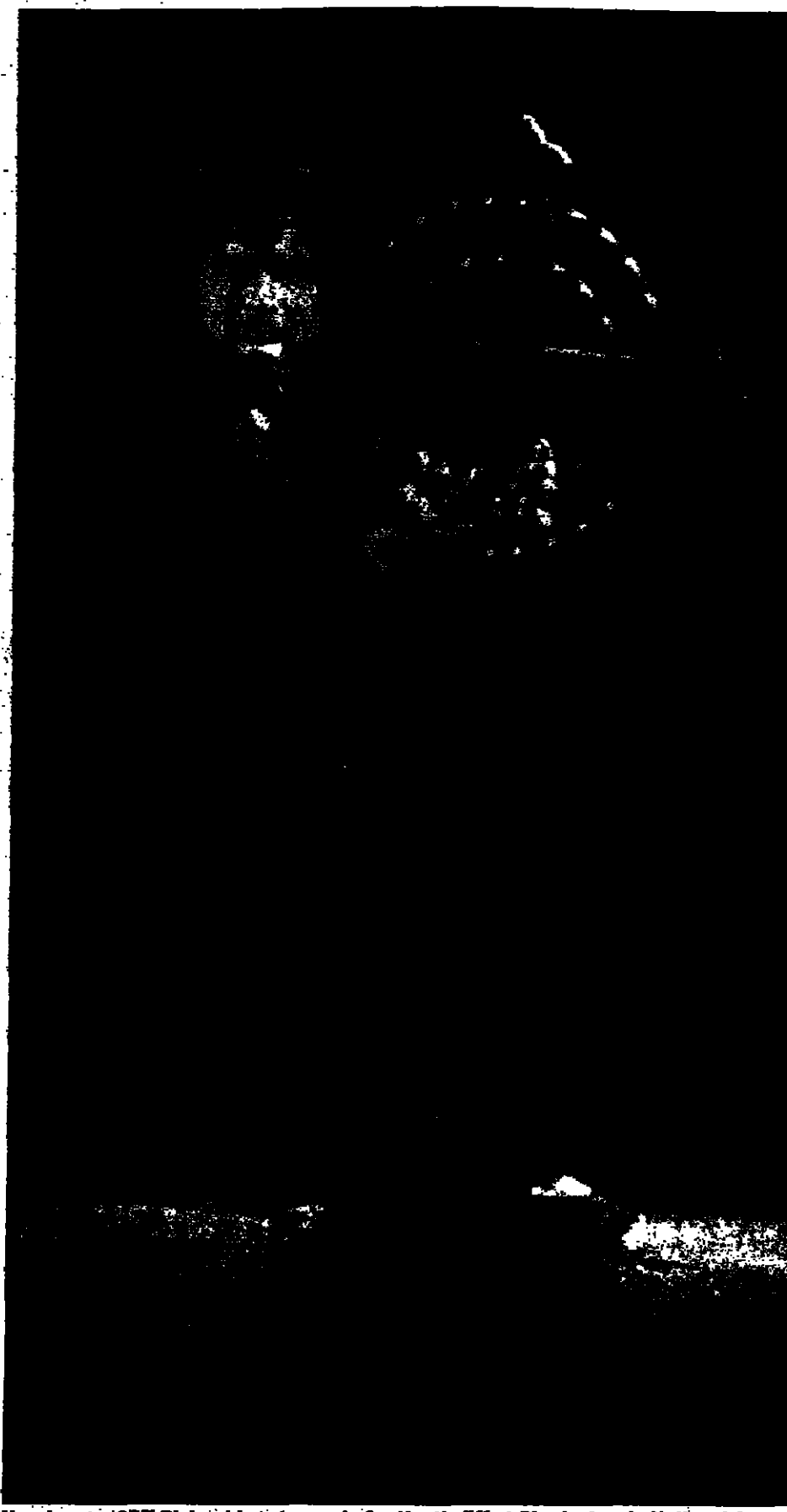
That now looks unlikely. Polygram, the company which made *Trainspotting*, have now offered this late-in-life, swarthy, passionate Cliff Richard a new film script - his first for 25 years.

'People said I couldn't do this. But I looked in the mirror and said: I'm still Cliff Richard'

ated computer projections were not used as a shortage of technical rehearsal time and other hi-tech mishaps caused their abandonment for the long-awaited first night of this £3.5m production.

Sir Cliff and the rest of the cast arrived in Birmingham yesterday after hiring Earls Court in London for four days to rehearse and in his eagerness to portray the demonic side of Heathcliff, Sir Cliff knocked out his fellow actor Jimmy Johnson in one of the rehearsal fight scenes.

Perhaps it was appropriate in this very odd piece of casting. In last night's show it was hard not to blink at Sir Cliff up on stage not only beating up his pregnant wife but also smoking opium. For this production travelled a lot further than Emily Bronte's Yorkshire, exploring the time that Heathcliff was away from Wuthering



New image: Cliff Richard in rehearsals for *Heathcliff* at Birmingham's National Arena

...and some other odd castings



Charles Boyer - *Garden of Allah* (1936)

Was Boris Androvsky in the tale of a Trappist whose conscience is restored by liquor on his wedding night. Better known as villainous husband to Ingrid Bergman's Paula Alquist in *Gaslight*.



Clark Gable - *Parnell* (1937)

Gable struggled with the role of an 19th century Irish revolutionary who comes to grief over his love for a married woman. Critic Frank Nugent called it "A singularly pallid, tedious and unconvincing drama."



Natalie Wood - *Gypsy* (1962)

Horribly miscast as stripper Gypsy Rose Lee, and a far cry from her most famous part as straight-laced Maria in *West Side Story*. One critic said she resembled a "plastic wind-up doll strutting the runway".



Dick van Dyke - *Mary Poppins* (1964)

Van Dyke's pitiful attempt at a Cockney accent still reduces audiences to hysterical laughter more than 30 years after the release of this children's classic.



Humphrey Bogart - *The Amazing Dr Clitterhouse* (1938)

Bogart deviated from his normal tough-guy roles to play a mad criminologist who becomes addicted to crime. He did not repeat the mistake.



Mick Jagger - *Ned Kelly* (1970)

Mick Jagger's sheep-stunningly bad portrayal of Ned Kelly, the Australian hero outlaw, nearly caused a diplomatic incident and was never likely to get an Oscar

Compiled by Sam Coates

Life for lorry driver who ended Celine's journey of optimism

Claire Garner

Lorry driver Stuart Morgan was convicted yesterday of the murder of 19-year-old French student, Celine Figard, who he picked up at a service station, raped and strangled before dumping her body in a ditch.



Honest student: Celine Figard was murdered by Stuart Morgan, who carried her body in his lorry for nine days



Morgan, 37, of Parkstone in Dorset, attacked Ms Figard after she had hitched a lift with him at a motorway service station in Hampshire last December. Detectives believe he carried the body in his lorry for nine days over the Christmas period before burying her in a ditch and abandoning her body in a lay-by near Winchester.

The jury reached their unanimous verdict at the end of the 11-day trial. Judge Morgan for life, Mr Justice Latham told him: "What you did to Celine has caused revulsion in the minds of all right-thinking people." Morgan had admitted giving her a lift, claimed they had consensual sex, but had denied murder.

Ms Figard's encounter with Morgan was the tragic culmination of a journey of youthful optimism. On 18 December the accountancy student had waived goodbye to her parents, Martine, 43, and Bernard, 47, at the family farmhouse in Ferrières-les-Soy, 250 miles south-east of Paris, and headed for England.

She had spent two months of the previous summer working at the Ashbourne Hotel in Roudingbridge, Hampshire, with

her cousin Jean-Marc. She was popular among guests and invited to work over Christmas. Although "naive and trusting", it is believed Ms Figard would never deliberately have put herself in danger. She had decided to hitch to save money - a decision which cost her her life.

Most of her journey was carefully planned; 90 per cent of it completed with lifts arranged by family and friends. It was only for the final stretch that she put her trust in a stranger.

At Chieveley service station at the junction of the M4 and A34 in Hampshire, she accepted a lift from her eventual killer, lured by the promise that she could use his mobile

phone to contact her relatives. She was last seen at 4.35pm climbing aboard Morgan's white Mercedes lorry. Shortly afterwards, she was dead. Her body remained in the bottom bunk of Morgan's cab throughout the Christmas period. Morgan continued driving and sleeping in the lorry for three days before parking the vehicle outside his house to enjoy Christmas with his 11-year-old son and wife.

It was not until 29 December that Morgan set about disposing of the body. As police forces around the country searched for Ms Figard and the sandy-haired, bearded driver with whom she was last seen, Morgan returned to work. At High Ercall near Telford,

Shropshire, he set fire to some of Celine's clothing, dumping her bloodied underwear in a hedge. He then travelled to the lay-by on the A449 near Ombersley, Worcestershire, where he dumped Celine's naked body in undergrowth by the road. Shortly after 12.30pm a local resident discovered the corpse and the nationwide murder hunt began.

Detective Superintendent Bob McCamont, who led the murder hunt, described Ms Figard as "the sort of person that anybody would be proud to have as a daughter".

"She was an articulate, honest student from a rural part of France who loved England. She was a lovely girl who spoke English fluently."

Her father Bernard, who made an emotional appeal to the British public two days before Christmas, said of his "beautiful little girl": "Celine was just a 19-year-old student trying to find her way in life and she went to England to improve her English. She was a dedicated student and she never had much time for boyfriends. My little Celine was too busy studying."

The description contrasted with the warped image of Ms Figard that Morgan presented to the court in his defence. He painted a portrait of a "druggie" and a "hussy" who seduced him with hours of their meeting.

Morgan, married twice and with three children, was a self-employed long-distance lorry driver and haulage contractor.

Near the busy dual carriageway where Ms Figard's body was dumped, someone has carved a small inscription onto one of the fence posts. It declares the green wooded copse: "Le Jardin de Celine" - Celine's Garden.

Owners of pets seek BSE answers

Charles Arthur
and Anthony Bevins

Pet food manufacturers denied yesterday that their products might be contaminated with BSE, but the MP who first raised the fears insisted that important safety questions had not been answered.

The Pet Food Manufacturers' Association (PFMA), whose members sold a billion pounds' worth of cat and dog foods last year, said that the suggestion by Martyn Jones, a microbiologist and Labour MP, that BSE-infected "meat and bone meal" (MBM) - produced from grinding down cattle carcasses - could end up in pet food was "a misunderstanding".

Amidst pet owners inundated the RSPCA and the PFMA with calls yesterday, seeking advice.

Under a government order, pet food containing MBM may not be prepared on the same premises as food for cattle or sheep. But the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) said yesterday that this was done to avoid cattle being fed any meat remains, and that it did not imply that MBM might be contaminated with BSE. However, the measure has clearly been taken so that there is no possibility of BSE-infected products being passed back into cattle feed. This "recycling" is believed to have caused the original epidemic, which has so far led to almost 164,000 cases of BSE being diagnosed, and an estimated 700,000 cattle which were developing the disease being passed as fit for human consumption. MBM is made from such cattle. The agent that causes BSE is not killed by the manufacturing process.

Dogs appear to be immune to BSE, but cats have developed a version, called feline spongiform encephalopathy (FSE). Since the first case was identified in 1990, 71 FSE cases have been reported; all in the UK. But there has been a sharp decline in cases: last year there were eight, but this year there have been just one. This fall mirrors the BSE epidemic, which in 1992 saw 36,000 cases in cattle. So far this year there have been 5,319 cases.

Mr Jones said yesterday that a number of questions remained unanswered about the material being used in pet food.

"Some petfood representatives have said that I have accepted that I misunderstood the situation. That is not true. Having spoken to them, there are still questions to be answered."

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news

THE CULLEN REPORT

Draconian laws that must let us hope

Safety strategy with no margin for error

James Cusick

The Government claimed yesterday that it had gone further than Lord Cullen's recommendations. However the force and precision of the 200-page report and its series of 28 recommendations had left little room for manoeuvre.

Tighter vetting of those applying for any firearm, increased police powers and police training in dealing with firearms, increased powers to inspect dealers, a new licensing regime and new security measures for all gun clubs will mean a new era for gun ownership.

The Government's adoption of Lord Cullen's advice will make British gun laws some of the most draconian in the world and far tougher than those of our European partners. However, restricted access to handguns in Britain was the core recommendation the Government had waited for since the 26-day inquiry ended on 10 July.

The report argued in favour of a clampdown on self-loading pistols and revolvers of any calibre held by individuals for target shooting.

It recommended safeguards in guns not in use in which internal mechanisms would be removed and locks fitted to barrels where practical. The separated parts would then be stored at clubs.

Crucially, Lord Cullen said that if such a system was not adopted then "the possession of such handguns by individual owners" should be banned.

The Government rejected the idea of "separation" and said it intended to go further than the report, "banning all high-calibre handguns" and prohibiting people from keeping even single shot handguns at home.

The report dismissed the wholesale prohibition of all guns, including rifles and shotguns, as unnecessary. Similarly Lord Cullen did not recommend the ending of the present system of certification, only its improvement. "Stopping short of a ban," the report stated, "is the one open to the least objection on the grounds of practicability."

The report made clear what will now happen to the sport of pistol shooting given the Government's intended ban, stating: "Ban on multi-shot handguns would to a very large extent destroy the sport of target shooting and have significant effects on the economy."

After the massacre at Dunblane Primary School on 13 March in which 16 children and their teacher were killed by Thomas Hamilton, the Cullen inquiry remit included the future safety of schools and the safeguards of those who work with children and adults.

The report's recommendations, adopted by the Government yesterday, will mean schools being ordered to "prepare a safety strategy" to protect pupils and staff. Where the funds will come from to pay for the improvement will now be made a problem for the Treasury.

A new national body for youth clubs and groups, which will see improved vetting and the national exchange of information, is to be set up.

The years when Thomas Hamilton was investigated by police after questionable conduct at the boys' club he ran are examined in detail in the report, together with the persistent rumours of paedophilia and the way Central Scotland's police enforced national gun laws. In one key sentence describing the methods used by the Central police force in their gathering of criminal intelligence, the report states: "It was a glaring deficiency in the operation of the force's information system."

One officer in particular, deputy chief constable Douglas McMurdo, is accused of "adopting an unduly narrow approach in which he paid not much more than lip service" to the idea that a person could be deemed unfit to have his gun licence renewed. Mr McMurdo, who resigned from Central Scotland Police yesterday shortly after the report was published, gave evidence to the inquiry as a witness. Lord Cullen's report said "Mr McMurdo's position ... underwent a disconcerting shift during the course of his evidence."

Shadow of the gunman: Practice yesterday at the Safari Gun Club in Chigwell, Essex

Photograph: Brian Harris

ly after the report was published, gave evidence to the inquiry as a witness. Lord Cullen's report said "Mr McMurdo's position ... underwent a disconcerting shift during the course of his evidence."

The regime Britain's gun owners face following the Cullen report will mean increased police powers. Gun clubs will also have to face an

era of safety measures. Many, the report accepts, will be unable to afford the changes and will go out of business.

Firearms certificate holders will be obliged to have mem-

bership of at least one gun club; each club will be required to inform the police when a certificate holder has ceased to be a member and gun clubs will have to appoint a dedicated per-

son to liaise with their local police.

A new national computer register, holding information on all individual certificate holders, will now be set up.

Funding issue left unanswered

Judith Judd
Education Editor

The Cullen report does not address the question teachers most want answered - how much extra money will there be for school security?

The Government has promised "substantial additional resources" from April next year. Local authorities will be given additional funds but will have to find 40 per cent of the costs themselves.

David Hart, general secretary of the National Association of

Head Teachers, said: "The Government has got to stop pussy-footing around and say unequivocally that it will provide 100 per cent of the cost of improving security out of brand new money. All parents are entitled to expect that their child will be safe in school. Schools cannot be expected to provide new security systems from their own hard-pressed resources or for local authorities to have to top up Government grants with money diverted from other educational needs."

Doug McAvoy, general sec-

retary of the National Union of Teachers, also argued that the question of cash was central. "Action plans and security plans are helpful but unless the money is there to back them up, they won't take schools anything like far enough."

Some teachers were disappointed by the report's failure to make more definite recommendations. Lord Cullen emphasises that each school must devise a strategy suited to its own circumstances and list a series of suggestions in the form of questions, for example:

should the numbers of entrances be restricted? He makes firmer recommendations about what should be done once an emergency is under way than about general measures to prevent intruders.

Schools have already become more security conscious after a series of violent incidents on or near school premises. Some have put up fences, blocked entrances, introduced identity badges. But almost all agree with Lord Cullen's view that it would be wrong to turn themselves into fortresses.

Resentment out on the range

Michael Streeter

The reaction to the near-total handgun ban among members of the Safari Gun Club in Chigwell, Essex, was swift and angry.

"Will it make the streets safer? No. Will it save anyone from dying? No," insisted regular Savvas Tountexis, after a session firing his Ceska Zbrojovka handgun at the club. "People are being deprived of what they enjoy doing without any social benefit for anyone. The Government is simply pan-

dering to a section of public opinion."

The club, which opened last year, has 150 members and is one of more than 2,000 in the country which will be struggling to survive. Its members had been bracing themselves for the bad news. Much of their anger stems from their belief that the Dunblane tragedy arose out of a failure of the licensing system, carried out by central Scotland police, and not the ownership of weapons per se.

They point to illegally held weapons in circulation - esti-

mated to exceed 4 million - contrasting with the 160,000 weapons likely to be banned by the Home Secretary, Michael Howard. They said British entrants would be barred from a number of international shooting events using .32 calibre weapons. Mr Tountexis, who owns six guns due to be banned was also worried about compensation, and said owners of weapons banned after the Hungerford massacre had still not received compensation.

Richard Law, the club's registered dealer, who watched

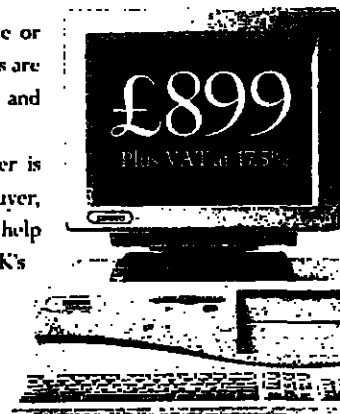
Michael Forsyth's announcement on television in stunned silence, said the club could still become a centre for .22 calibre pistol and revolver users. "It depends on whether the owners will still want to come."

The angry mood in Chigwell was echoed at the Shooters' Rights Association which represents 5,000 shooters and dealers. Spokesman Guy Savage claimed 10,000 jobs could be lost: "One million shooters are royally pissed off at being made a scapegoat for the actions of others."

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JP 21.10.1996

we will never see such horrors again

Police chief resigns after criticism

Jason Bennetto
Crime Correspondent

The police officer who was chiefly responsible for allowing Thomas Hamilton to keep the handguns used in the Dunblane massacre resigned yesterday after being severely criticised in the Cullen Inquiry.

Douglas Murdoch, 56, was at the time Deputy Chief Constable of Central Scotland Police, and was in charge of approving firearms certificates.

He renewed Hamilton's licence despite a warning from a colleague that he was unstable and an "unsuitable person to possess a firearm". A second officer also reported that she was concerned about Hamilton.

Furthermore, Lord Cullen described the failure to record the warnings in Hamilton's criminal intelligence file as a "glaring deficiency".

Mr Murdoch, who became Assistant Inspector of Constabulary for Scotland in February, yesterday handed his resignation to Michael Forsyth, the Secretary of State for Scotland, which was accepted.

The Cullen Inquiry heard how Detective Sergeant Paul Hughes wrote a memo in 1991 asking superior officers to consider revoking Hamilton's licence after investigating claims he had assaulted several boys during a camp. He wrote: "I am firmly of the opinion that Hamilton is an unsavoury character and unstable personality."

He added that he was "a scheming, devious and deceitful individual who is not to be trusted".

A second officer agreed although a third did not. Mr Murdoch wrote "no action" on the memo and later told the inquiry that DS Hughes' remarks were based on "a gut feeling".

In 1995 Detective Constable Anne Anderson visited Hamilton to consider his application for his certificate to be renewed. She reported she had a "strange feeling" about him and felt slightly intimidated. Mr Murdoch again signed the renewal after considering the evidence for "a few minutes".

Lord Cullen said that Mr Murdoch placed great importance on the fact the Mr Hamilton did not have a criminal record. He said he appeared to have "adopted an unduly narrow approach in which he paid not much more than lip service to the idea that a person could be 'unfitted' in the absence of a conviction or pending criminal case."

Mr Murdoch yesterday said: "Throughout four years as a police cadet and 37 years as a police officer I have always tried to do what was right and proper and within the law."

"In my dealings with Thomas Hamilton, whether it was with regard to his complaints against the police or the licensing of his firearms, I likewise tried to do what I felt was right and within the law."

"I firmly believed at the time and still do now that the decisions I took were the only ones open to me. Nevertheless, I have to accept the conclusions reached by Lord Cullen. In the circumstances I do not believe I can continue as Assistant Inspector of Constabulary."

Central Scotland chief constable William Wilson last night spoke of "sadness" over the resignation of Mr Murdoch.

He added Lord Cullen had made "some criticism" of his force, particularly the time taken to notify relatives of the dead, and in its firearms licensing procedures.



Pamela Ross, who lost a daughter at Dunblane, said the recommendations would not prevent another massacre

Photograph: Colin McPherson

Pressures made ban inevitable

Colin Brown
Chief Political Correspondent

Behind the high minded statements yesterday, party politics and public pressure made an almost total ban on handguns inevitable.

Michael Forsyth, the Secretary of State for Scotland, played a pivotal role in forcing the Cabinet and the Home Secretary, Michael Howard, to adopt a tougher line. Mr Forsyth visited the school with George Robertson, his Labour shadow, on 13 March, the day of the killing.

Both were terribly moved by the aftermath of the carnage, the holes in the walls and the scattered, bloodstained clothes of Hamilton's victims.

A week later, John Major ordered Lord Cullen to carry out an investigation into the killings. He was well-respected for his pragmatism after his inquiry into the Piper Alpha oil rig disaster and his terms of reference were drawn wide to enable him to make recommendations "as

Countdown to new legislation

13 March: Thomas Hamilton kills 16 children and teacher in three minutes at Dunblane
15 March: John Major and Tony Blair visit Dunblane
21 March: Inquiry by Lord Cullen announced
28 April: 35 killed in Tasmania killing, Australian Government announces ban on 10 May
1 August: Six Tory MPs on Home Affairs Select Committee visited for refusing to recommend a ban
3 October: Alistair Darling, Shadow Home Secretary, addresses Labour Party conference
10 October: John Major avoids commitment at Tory Party conference
18 October: Cabinet committee agrees to ban except for .22 weapons

may seem appropriate".

David Mellor, the former Home Office minister, became the first Tory MP to call for an outright ban on handguns. He had few sympathisers on his own benches. In a BBC radio interview yesterday he cracked with anger at the way home office ministers dismissed his calls as a "knee-jerk" reaction.

The Home Office wanted a long cool look to be taken, possibly in the hope pressure for a total ban would fade. Ministers were keen to avoid being bounced into bad laws such as the Dangerous Dogs Act.

But events conspired to keep the demands for a ban high on the agenda. A deranged gunman in Tasmania killed 35 peo-

ple in a gun massacre on 28 April. Within 12 days the Australian Government announced its own ban on guns.

The speed of the Australian Government's response made the British Government look leisurely. The turning point came on 1 August when a group of six Tory MPs were visited for using their majority on the Commons select committee on Home Affairs to reject a ban on guns.

At the time, their position was defended by ministers. But the public outrage was a foretaste for the Government of the backlash which it would face if it sought to take similar half-hearted measures.

Mother: 'They sold us short after all'

James Cusick

"It is not enough to stop this happening again." That stark message, from Pamela and Kenny Ross, who lost their daughter Joanna in the carnage at Dunblane Primary School on 13 March, came yesterday after publication of the report they had patiently waited for.

On 1 August, in a letter to the Government which appeared on the front page of the *Independent*, Mrs Ross asked it quite simply to "Listen to me". The passionate, logical, and plain-speaking letter had enormous impact.

Next week the couple's other daughter, Alison, will celebrate her first birthday. Mrs Ross's letter asked the simple question: "Will you be able to guarantee her safety when she starts school?" The answer they said they got yesterday from the Cullen report and the Government's action which will follow was a resounding "No".

At their home in Dunblane yesterday the couple said: "We've really got no feeling left ... Lord Cullen had a unique moment. If he had unequivocally advocated a complete ban, the Government would have been left with no choice." The partial ban, still allowing ownership of 22-calibre guns stored at clubs, "is not enough".

At the Dunblane Hydro Hotel, just up the road from the school, the parents of all the deceased children issued a joint statement: "The ... atrocity that was committed that day against our children, their teachers, their school, this community, this country, was so horrendous that it almost defies belief ... We believe the seeds of this tragedy and of other such tragedies rest in what we believe to be a gun culture in this country, a gun culture perpetuated by a tiny minority."

Friday, 18 October
at 10:00 pm (British time)



How to call France from the United Kingdom

On 18 October 1996 at 10:00 pm British time, France will switch to a new telephone numbering plan. These changes anticipate for the ever increasing volume of telecommunications traffic in France (new services, fax, mobile phones, etc.). This new plan provides a reserve of numbers for several decades to come and marks a further step

towards harmonization with European directives and international recommendations. This New Telephone Numbering Plan applies to all numbers you call in France. To call a number in France from the United Kingdom, after 00 simply dial the country code 33, followed by a 9-digit number.

9 digits to call all numbers

To call the "provinces" (outside Paris and the Paris region)

Depending on the location, dial 2, 3, 4 or 5 in front of the current number, which remains the same.

The digits to be added are shown on the area code map and in the area code table.

For example: 00 33 20 becomes 00 33 3 20



To call Paris and the Paris region

There are no changes. You will continue to dial the 9-digit number which begins with 1.

For example: 00 33 1

To call mobile numbers

To call a mobile phone, dial 6 before the current 8-digit number, which remains the same.

For example: 00 33 01 becomes 00 33 6 01

Add:	To the current number beginning with:	Add:	To the current number beginning with:	Add:	To the current number beginning with:
3	20	2	48	4	76
3	21	5	49	4	77
3	22	4	50	4	78
3	23	2	51	4	79
3	24	5	52	3	80
3	25	2	53	3	81
3	26	5	54	3	82
3	27	5	55	3	83
3	28	5	56	3	84
3	29	5	57	3	85
2	30	5	58	3	86
2	31	5	59	3	87
2	32	3	60	3	88
2	33	5	61	3	89
5	34	5	62	3	90
2	35	5	63	4	91
2	36	5	64	4	92
2	37	4	65	4	93
2	38	4	66	4	94
2	39	4	67	4	95
2	40	4	68	4	96
2	41	4	69	4	97
4	42	4	70	2	98
2	43	4	71	2	99
3	44	4	72	2	99
5	45	4	73	2	99
5	46	4	74		
2	47	4	75		

List valid as March 31, 1996

Add:	To the current number beginning with:	Add:	To the current number beginning with:
6	01	6	07
6	02	6	08
6	03	6	09
6	06		

Remember...

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How to phone when you are in France

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REF

No Party Conference has ever faced a more fundamentally important issue than the one the Referendum Party will debate on Saturday in Brighton.

What is at stake is the very future of Britain as an independent nation.

You, personally, may believe that Britain should abandon its sovereignty and merge into a federal European super-state, governed by officials in Brussels.

On the other hand, you may think that we should retain our British sovereignty and work with our European partners for our mutual advantage. That we should be one of a family of nations.

But to be blunt, the politicians couldn't care less what you think. Time and again, they have denied the people of Britain their basic democratic right to decide our nation's future.

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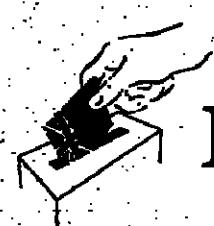
And once we have, we will disband.

At Saturday's Conference in Brighton, you will see that our speakers and supporters come from every shade of the political spectrum; left, right and centre.

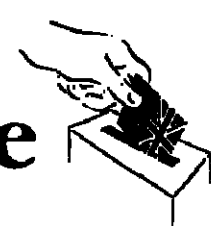
But they are casting aside their traditional political loyalties until after the election, because they know that this issue is of such overwhelming importance that it is above party politics.

They believe that only the people have the right to decide the future of Britain as a nation. Not its politicians.

REFERENDUM PARTY



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If you support the aims of the Referendum Party, call FREEPHONE 0800 919753 (lines open 7am - 11pm 7 days a week), or write to the Referendum Party, PO Box 1, Portishead, Bristol, BS20 8BR. Please quote REF 1/17/10.

This advertisement prepared by Banks Hoggins O'Shea on behalf of the publisher: the Referendum Party, 1st Floor, Dean Bradley House, 52 Horseferry Road, London SW1P 2AF.

news

The battle begins to take the boredom out of Bracknell

Clare Garner

It's grey, it's concrete and has a reputation for being soulless and dull. Yet the Berkshire town of Bracknell is the unlikely setting for a battle over who will build Britain's first big town centre shopping development since the tide turned against out-of-town supermarkets.

Covering more than 1 million square feet, the £300m Bracknell mall will be one of the UK's largest shopping developments in one of the wealthiest regions of the country. More importantly, it is the biggest sign so far of a switch away from out-of-town developments which destroy city centre shops and threaten the Green Belt, which the Government has tried to halt.

The development is eagerly awaited by local people in the Berkshire new town, who have seen their purpose-built shopping centre decline as custom has moved to adjoining towns such as Reading.

Two rival investors submitted plans to redevelop the centre of Bracknell earlier this year, but when Allied London Properties realised the scale of Legal & General's scheme, it tried to go one better by unveiling a revised scheme.

Bracknell cannot support both schemes and at the moment Bracknell council is running with the L&G one. Allied General, which paid £32m for the existing 300,000 sq ft Princess Square shopping centre in June, is on the offensive.

The locals do not care who builds the complex; all they know is that they want it soon, before the town "dies". "There are no big stores, no nothing," grumbled Alan Rolph, 38, a self-employed cleaner who has four children. "We need something or the town is going to die. There's nothing to bring people into it. If you want anything, you go to Reading or Slough. There's no C&A, no Marks and

Sparks, no BHS. If you want to go round to shops for kids' clothes you're limited. Bentsalls [the only department store] is expensive and you've got no choice."

Margaret Boucher, 59, tossed 2p into the grey-tiled wishing well in Princess Square. "I'm just wishing for general happiness," she said. "There's not much to be joyful about for people round here. If they got more shops -

some decent shops - somewhere joyful, happy and light, it might just put a smile on their faces. It makes the chore of shopping a little easier."

"You couldn't do your Christmas shopping in Bracknell. It's shabby. Go to Milton Keynes and places like that and they've got wonderful shopping areas. There are a lot of people round here and they deserve something better."

At a glance, Bracknell doesn't look too badly off. It has its fair share of "All Enquiries: Strutt and Parker" posters slapped on boarded-up shops, but it also has its Topshop, Dorothy Perkins, Burton, Boots and Primark. There's a WH Smith, Dixons, Sainsbury, Sketchley and Clarks.

The 100,000 residents would rather shop anywhere than Bracknell. Their biggest grumble is that there is only one department store in the town.

Gary Lovett, 29, a barman, shops there by necessity. He can't afford a car to go to near-

Some interesting Bracknell facts

1. The town was founded in 1830.
2. Bracknell was a railway town until 1962.
3. The town was once a coal-mining area.
4. The town was once a coal-mining area.
5. The town was once a coal-mining area.
6. The town was once a coal-mining area.
7. The town was once a coal-mining area.

by Camberley. "We need a Marks and Spencers in town," he said. "And it would be nice to have a Tesco's as well as a Sainsbury's because they are both fighting to get the better deals so you could go from one to the other."

Two New Zealanders had a different perspective. "Hanging around shopping malls is insane," remarked Colin Usherwood, 25, who has been working in the town for the past year. "What this place needs is night life. There's only one night club - Apres - and it's not even in Bracknell, it's in Bin-

would like to get the two parties together and come up with a comprehensive plan."

But there is little chance of that; both parties are determined to jazz up the town single-handed. "Ours is more than a shopping mall," rejoined Michael Ingall, Allied London's property director. "L&G's retail is the same size as ours, but as far as I know they are not proposing the other uses. We'll have a theatre, a hotel, a multi-screen cinema and branded restaurants."


Mr Ingall claims that Allied London's development will be finished sooner than L&G's. "It is difficult to see how they (L&G) can open their shopping centre before 2008. We could be ready within three years."

Stephen Mundy, L&G's property director, said Allied London's plans to expand Princess Square were not a real threat. "We're not particularly worried about it. Leading experts have said that obviously our scheme should go forward," he said.

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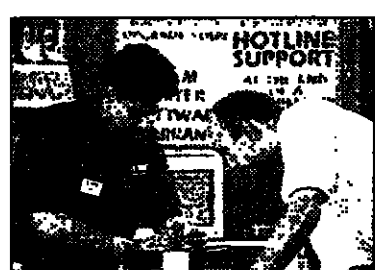
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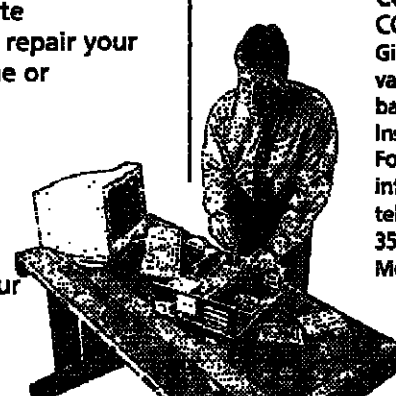
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Avoid Milton Keynes if you shop until you drop

Glenda Cooper

Welcome to Milton Keynes, the most expensive place to shop in Britain. The home of concrete cows has topped a list of 97 places around the UK in the latest cost of living survey. The report, published every six months by the Reward Group, the pay consultants, looks at the yearly costs of goods and services as well as the required amount of income.

The yearly bill for a basket of goods and services in Milton Keynes is £10,189 per year compared to the national average of £9,724. It takes over from Manchester which was named most expensive place to shop six months ago.

Reward looks at the price of various items such as cereal, salad cream, kippers, golf club subscriptions, school fees and dry cleaning.

The cheapest place to shop is Billingham in Teesside where shopping sets you back £9,066, followed by St Austell, Barmsey, Morecambe and Preston. A spokeswoman for the Shop-

Britain's biggest and smallest bills

Most expensive places to shop (with yearly total)	Least expensive places to shop (with yearly total)
1. Milton Keynes £10,189	1. Billingham £9,066
2. St Austell £9,724	2. St Austell £9,066
3. Barmsey £9,066	3. Barmsey £9,066
4. Morecambe £9,066	4. Morecambe £9,066
5. Preston £9,066	5. Preston £9,066
6. Manchester £9,066	6. Manchester £9,066

ping Centre, Milton Keynes, which has 180 shops and regularly attracts half a million visitors a week, said yesterday that she found the report "surprising. I would never expect us to be the most expensive. I think it is quite alarming to be labelled most expensive when most people think it's wonderful value shopping."

The survey is used by firms as a yardstick for wage increases and reveals that shop prices have risen 3.9 per cent over the past 12 months. Most of this rise took place in the first six months (August 1995 to February 1996) with prices only rising by 0.9 per cent in the most recent six months. The rise has been driven mainly by food prices which went up by 5.9 per cent. However family income requirements (the amount of income needed to maintain living standards including housing costs) have fallen by 0.5 per cent in the last six months, mainly due to the drop in mortgage rate from 8.39 per cent in August 1995 to 6.93 per cent in August 1996.

Greater London is still the place where the family income requirement is highest. At £21,948 a year it is 19 per cent higher than the national average which is £18,451.

The place where you can get by on least money is Merthyr Tydfil, in Wales, where a family can live on £15,527. Barnsley

comes in second. The figures also reveal which items have risen in price most in the past ten years. A decade ago entrance to a football match would have cost on average £2.97 against £8.67 today. Joining a golf club cost £178 compared to £405 today.

Soap powder has more than doubled, from 90p to £1.97, and bacon has risen from 88p to £1.66. However those who delayed buying a television in 1985 until this year will be relieved to hear that the price has gone down from £262 to £258.

Having calculated the difference between average incomes and average price of bills, the Scots top the quality of life index, followed by the North and Greater London. The South East has the worst quality of life, with the West Midlands and the South West only marginally better.

■ The Cost of Living Survey is available from the Reward Group, Reward House, Diamond Way, Stone Business Park, Stone, Staffordshire ST15 0SD price £180.

DAILY POEM

The Flight of the Sparrow

By James Harpur

*My lord, although we cannot know
The mysteries of the afterlife
The span of time we spend on earth
Appears to me to be like this:
Imagine sitting in your hall
In winter, feasting with your chiefs
And counsellors - your faces glowing
From flames that crackle in the hearth.
Outside, the wintry night is lashed
By winds and driving rain and snow.
Suddenly a sparrow darts in
Through a door, flits across the hall
And flies out through another one.
Inside, cocooned in light and warmth
It can enjoy a moment's clam
Before it vanishes, rejoining
The freezing night from which it came.*

*Such is our journey through this life.
But as to what's in store for us
Beyond the doors of birth and death,
We are completely in the dark.*

James Harpur's translation from Latin of Bede's description of the conversion of King Edwin of Northumbria to Christianity in the 7th century appears in *The Monk's Dream* (Avalon, £7.95). He will also be reading it - and other poems - at the Voice Box on the South Bank at 7.30pm this evening. It was Paulinus, first Archbishop of York, who recounted the story of the sparrow, to Edwin, early Christianity making clever use of pagan motifs and stories to convey its essential message.

Ministers' retreat over legal aid

Patricia Wynn Davies
Legal Affairs Editor

One of the most controversial features of the Government's planned legal-aid reforms may be dropped following a ministerial concession that it might be too harsh.

July's White Paper insisted that initial fees of perhaps £10 to £20 would have to be paid by all assisted people, even those on benefit, who "issue or defend most types of court proceedings. Further minimum contributions might be payable at subsequent stages in proceedings".

But Gary Streeter, parliamentary secretary at the Lord Chancellor's Department, revealed at last weekend's Law Society annual conference that the Government was having second thoughts about whether the provision should apply to people who have no choice but to respond to proceedings started against them.

The ministerial retreat - Mr Streeter has repeatedly de-

scribed legally aided litigants as "state-funded Rottweilers" - was sparked by a question at a conference last month. A delegate asked Mr Streeter whether a woman too poor to pay the application fee who was being challenged for custody of her family should simply tell her husband to "have the children".

The Lord Chancellor's Department confirmed yesterday that Mr Streeter believed that defendants should not have to pay the fee, particularly in family cases, and would be seeking guidance from legal-aid practitioners.

The change of heart coincides with publication of a Gallup poll for the Law Society in which 56 per cent of the 2,108 respondents said that even a £10 to £20 fee was too much for pensioners and those on social security. Eighty-four per cent of respondents agreed that current legal-aid spending of £1.4bn a year should continue, at least at current levels, because justice was "too important to ration".

John 10.152

Commitments

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Mars the target in space-race revival

Charles Arthur
Science Editor

A new space race between the US and Russia is in the offing – but this time the object is to reach Mars, rather than the moon, and bring back a sample from its surface.

The US space agency, Nasa, yesterday unveiled detailed plans of the two spacecraft that it will launch in the next six weeks, to land on our closest planetary neighbour next year. But Russia also has advanced plans for a space mission to the planet, with an almost identical timetable for arrival. However, it has had to overcome serious financial problems – and has sought funding from Germany, France, the UK and US, and eastern European countries.

None of the missions, though, will bring back samples: each is a one-way trip. Return trips are not planned until 2005 at the earliest, while the prohibitive cost of sending a crewed mission – which would run into billions of pounds – means it is not even tentatively planned before 2010. The two-year round trip would be psychologically exhausting; the US astronaut Shannon Lucid was worn down by her unplanned 188-day stay on the Mir space station after shuttle problems extended her mission.

The announcement by Nasa aims to build on the excitement generated by the announcement from a team of US scientists that they had found evidence for past life on Mars in a meteorite. The findings have not been confirmed, but they boosted Nasa's profile when its budget was under attack, and impelled President Bill Clinton to announce substantial backing for the agency's planned space missions.

The first of the Nasa spacecraft, the \$200m *Mars Global Surveyor*, is due to be launched on 6 November and the other, the \$150m *Mars Pathfinder*, on 2 December. It would actually be *Pathfinder* which should arrive first – on 4 July 1997. It will consist of a stationary lander and a six-wheeled surface rover, intended to be controlled from Earth with a time delay of between six and 41 minutes between order and response. It will also carry out atmospheric tests.

Previous tests on Mars, by the *Viking* lander in the 1970s, showed no signs of life. The *Global Surveyor* is due to arrive in orbit around Mars in September 1997, and begin putting together high-resolution maps of the surface, and of the weather and climate of the planet in the following March.

Russia's answer to the American announcement is its *Mars 96* spacecraft – the first deep-space mission since the fall of the Soviet Union. Due for launch next month, the \$450m project will have both an orbiting craft and two landing craft, both unmanned. They will shoot darts under the surface to investigate the soil chemistry. It will also investigate the atmosphere, mineral deposits, seismic activity and magnetic fields.

The Soviet Union's last foray to Mars ended in failure, when technical failures on the unmanned craft meant contact was lost with the *Phobos 1* and *Phobos 2* missions in September 1988 and March 1989, just as they were approaching orbit.

Japan is also planning to send probes to Mars in 1998.

Tribal chief: face of the man who would be king



Past perfect: The Prince of Wales, later Edward VII, photographed as an American Indian chief on a visit to British Columbia in 1910 (above); and (right) in uniform on a trip to the state in the 1920s. Photograph: Assignments/Norwich



The young face of the future King Edward VIII is among an unusual collection of royal photographs found hidden in a school cupboard, which were donated to the nation yesterday.

The image of the teenage Prince of Wales, dressed as a chief of the Blackfoot tribe, is in an album of 100 pictures taken by Canadian photographer Howard Chapman. The collection was presented to Bircham Primary School, Norfolk, by Queen Mary in 1945. The school is five miles from the royal family's Sandringham estate.

Most of the prints are of members of the royal family meeting officers on the front during the First World War and visiting Victoria, British Columbia. They cover a period from the 1890s to the 1930s. The collection also records

the suffering of Canadian soldiers in the mud of Flanders.

Queen Mary also gave the school a wooden curio cabinet to display the album and other gifts. The pictures are believed to have been put in the back of the cabinet after teachers decided that some of the war pictures were too disturbing for young children. For decades the album, entitled *Those Glorious Years*, was left to gather dust.

Three years ago it was rediscovered by former acting head teacher Ann Brown, who sent the pictures to Norwich Museum for safe-keeping.

The school, which has just 29 pupils, yesterday donated the album to the Royal Commonwealth Society photographic collection at Cambridge University library.

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NEWS

WHOSE BOOM?



Good news on jobs conceals a painful truth

DIANE COYLE
Economics Editor

The number of people claiming unemployment benefit fell last month to its lowest level for more than five years. The drop of 35,600 was the biggest for nearly two years, signalling that the economy's faster growth rate is creating more jobs.

The recovery is also feeding through to people's pockets. Growth in average earnings rose to 4 per cent in July and August, the highest wages growth since mid-1994.

If unemployment continues falling at its current pace, the Conservatives will go to the polls with the headline jobless total below 2 million for the first time since early 1991. Angela Knight, Economic Secretary to the Treasury, said: "Competitive Britain is leading the way for job creation in Europe."

The British unemployment rate is one of the lowest in Europe and has been falling for nearly four years. Some forecasters think it will fall below 1.5 million later next year, which would be the lowest since 1980.

This performance is considered by the Tories to be one of the jewels in their economic crown and the reward for the deregulation of the UK labour market.

Critics challenge this tri-

umphalism by pointing to several flaws in the British jobs record. One is simply that the headline count, the number of people claiming unemployment benefit, is flawed by the exclusion of many people who are ineligible for it. Unemployment on the international definition – those actively seeking and available to work – is higher, and fell less than the headline total in the first half of this year.

Even on the broader definition, though, unemployment had fallen to 2.3 million by the spring from a late-1992 peak of just under 3 million. Charge number two from the critics is that many people are so discouraged by the futile hunt for jobs that they have stopped looking. The evidence for this depends on which figures are used. On some counts employment has risen since 1992 by less than unemployment has fallen.

Yet the most comprehensive measure paints a reasonably bright picture of job creation during the past four years. And the notion that most of the increase of around 700,000 has been in part-time jobs for women is not completely borne out by the evidence. The extra employment has been divided about half and half between men and women. A third of the new jobs have been full time, two thirds part time.

The charge that does stick is that there is growing inequality in pay. Average earnings in the economy have risen steadily at all levels of income, and by more than inflation. But according to figures published recently by the OECD, there has been a bigger increase in earnings inequality in Britain since the early 1980s than in any other industrial country apart from the US. This is partly due to the increase in the number of no-earner households, in the poorest 10th of the population.

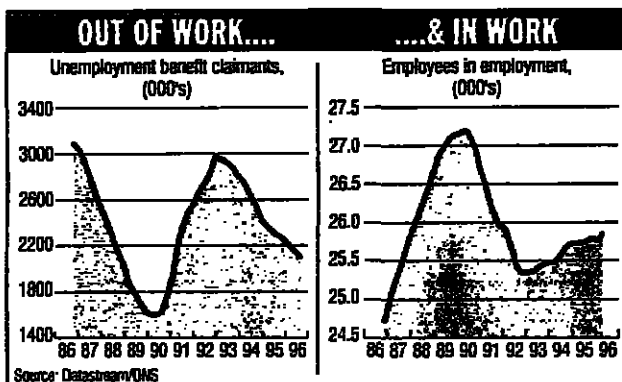
Despite the gentle criticism of this social divisiveness from the OECD, the Government is sticking to its free-market guns. As William Waldegrave, Chief Secretary to the Treasury, put it in a recent speech: "A job is the best welfare."

Alarm in the City,
page 22

The unemployment puzzle: The headline figures continue to be excellent but other statistics tell a different story. While ministers say a job is the best welfare, many people have found the search fruitless and given up



Happy in his work Martin Heaney – "Contracting suits me. I've had a number of offers of permanent jobs, but I always say no" Photograph: Andrew Brooman



Low-paid lose as temps create new wealth gap

Yvette Cooper

The dole queue is getting shorter, and new jobs are being created all the time. Great news for some, but unfortunately the new jobs created, and the new employment prospects people face are deeply divided.

For some, opportunities are growing. But too many people remain trapped in a far more depressing part of the labour market, where economic growth has done little to improve their fortunes.

First the good news. Jobs in professional or managerial fields have gone up by over 300,000 in the last four years. Admittedly a third of them are part time and two-thirds are temporary, contributing to the notion that middle-class job insecurity is increasing. But the reality for those new professional workers is not quite as insecure as the statistics suggest.

For a start, many of those new part-time workers are students trying to get extra cash while they study. And even temporary jobs need not be so bad in the growing fields where professional skills are in high demand.

Take Martin Heaney. Aged 39, he left a job in the property industry to retrain in computers and systems development. Now he moves from contract to contract, placed by computer consultancies such as Ean, the company that found him his current job at HSBC Asset Management.

The fact that the contracts are temporary doesn't bother Mr Heaney in the slightest: "I was heartbroken when I lost my permanent job, but within a year my salary had more than doubled." He likes the transitory nature of the work too: "Contracting suits me. I've had a number of offers of permanent jobs, but I always say no thank you."

Mr Heaney does indeed get plenty of job offers. During the 10 minutes we spoke, he

took a call from another recruitment agency offering him more work. He has taken risks and worked hard to get the skills that keep him in demand.

But the new jobs and the people who get them are not all as lucky as him. Quite the reverse. Many of those who lack his qualifications (or the opportunity to acquire them) are having a bad time in that other world behind the unemployment statistics.

Look at the other boom area for jobs growth: personal and protective services. Translated that means security guards and care-workers, some of the worst-paid employees in the country. And these new jobs are not even numerous enough to replace the jobs lost by low-skilled workers in manufacturing, construction, and clerical work. So for those without qualifications, job opportunities are contracting not expanding.

Even worse, as LSE economist Paul Gregg points out, many of the people in temporary, low-paid jobs, cycle in and out of unemployment, rather than moving on to better jobs. An astonishing 52 per cent of the new unemployment claims last year had been off the dole for less than a year before finding themselves out of work again; 12 per cent of them were back on the dole after less than four weeks in work.

And those that do sign off for good – and contribute to those falling unemployment figures – do not necessarily move into work. Much of the fall in the unemployment rate – particularly for the over 35s – is accounted for by people giving up and leaving the labour market altogether.

The Nineties labour market is becoming more and more unequal. Although many are better off than ever before, for others, employment prospects are becoming ever more grim. For them the so-called employment boom is worlds away.

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من الأصل

M16 supplied arms to Argentine navy

Christopher Bellamy
Defence Correspondent

The pride of the Argentine navy, including its flagship, is only able to operate because of spare parts provided as part of an operation by Britain's Secret Intelligence Service, M16, in flagrant breach of the embargo on British military sales to Argentina introduced after the Falklands War.

Two British-built Type-42 destroyers, including the flagship, *Hercules*, and four Meko-class frigates, built in Germany but powered by Rolls-Royce engines, would be unable to operate now without spare parts made in the United States. They are copies of original Rolls components obtained illegally as part of the M16 operation, codenamed Tigris.

The revelations are embarrassing for the British Government. Two ministers, Ian Lang and Malcolm Rifkind, have criticised the Labour party for selling the ships to Argentina in the 1970s. Now it appears, M16 kept the Argentine navy afloat after the Falklands war, even though Argentine claims to the Falklands – a potential *casus belli* – have not been withdrawn.

According to Channel 4's

Dispatches programme tonight, the man at the centre of the affair is Clive Russell, M16's man in Argentina in 1987 when the Argentine navy was running out of spare parts for the Rolls-Royce engines powering the British ships it ordered in 1970. Unable to get the new parts they needed to make accurate copies any other way, they approached Mr Russell at the Naval Club in Buenos Aires.

Mr Russell, a former Royal Navy officer who had built up business contacts in Argentina, immediately contacted his M16 controller who encouraged him to help the Argentines as a means of gaining access to the centre of the Argentine military-industrial complex, which he did. The case has remarkable similarities to the Matrix Churchill affair, in which businessmen working for M16 and believing they were immune from prosecution were prosecuted by other Government agencies.

Mr Russell became concerned that, in his words, M16 were encouraging me to break the law in order to have, in their view, the greater benefit of precise information. He continued: "They would go to any lengths in order to satisfy their hunger for information."

He decided to reveal his story because "the present government has made a mockery of democracy and they have betrayed the men and women who sailed from here to die and be wounded in the Falkland Islands war".

M16's zeal to obtain the most precise information about Argentina's armed forces is understandable, as it was widely blamed for the failure to predict the invasion of the Falklands in 1982.

Mr Russell was approached by a senior Argentine admiral, Edgardo Segura, and asked for help in getting the spare parts. He was asked to spend 10 days in Puerto Belgrano, a secret naval and air base, assessing the state of the navy's engines and the maritime air strike force of Super Etendards. This gave him "grade A" intelligence.

Because of the embargo on military exports from Britain to Argentina, a firm called Compitex Technology was set up in New York state to copy the key parts obtained by divers means from around the world for a fee of \$6m. Some were stolen from Rolls-Royce in Britain.

Mr Russell became concerned that the re-equipment of the Argentine navy was going too well and that in its quest for

information M16 was defying Parliament, becoming "an agency out of control".

He therefore tried to interrupt operation Tigris, throwing one key component – an A63 bearing – into the Hudson river. Its disappearance was the subject of extensive correspondence between Admiral Segura and his colleagues.

The fact that the Argentine navy's best ships are still operating suggests that it did not sabotage the programme, however.

Eventually the Argentines became suspicious. Mr Russell was subsequently attacked in Buenos Aires and badly beaten up. "They severely damaged my spine and did other most unpleasant things that I suppose I'd rather not talk about," he left Buenos Aires in a wheelchair and did not return to Argentina until he helped make tonight's film.

In 1991 M16 told him his intelligence-gathering services were no longer needed, but operation Tigris continues. "I feel terribly let down by M16," Mr Russell said. "One is in a position of considerable danger under the pretext of patriotism and then M16, to all intents and purposes, just wash their hands."



Crying out: Noa Ben Artzi, granddaughter of the assassinated Israeli prime minister, Yitzhak Rabin, weeping at her army graduation near Jerusalem as her commander quoted from her speech at her grandfather's funeral. Photograph: AP

Netanyahu widens rift with forces

Patrick Cockburn
Jerusalem

Distrust between the Israeli armed forces and Benjamin Netanyahu has reached a new peak as officers complain that their advice on relations with the Palestinians is ignored whenever it conflicts with the political platform of the Prime Minister.

Revelations about the anger in the defence establishment, including the Shin Bet security service, comes in an interview with Professor Ze'ev Ma'oz, of Tel Aviv University, who writes in the daily *Haaretz* which coolly discusses the prospects for a military push. He says a coup

by the army "in order to change the policy could be attractive".

The gap between Mr Netanyahu and the armed forces has deepened since his decision to open the tunnel under the old city of Jerusalem which led to violence in which 15 Israelis and 60 Palestinians died. "I know the defence establishment sent messages to the Prime Minister that an intifada [Palestinian uprising] is brewing here and Arafat will not be able to control it," said Professor Ma'oz of the Centre for Strategic Studies.

Mr Netanyahu and the Israeli right has always seen the army high command and the heads of the intelligence agencies as part

of the Labour establishment. But Mr Netanyahu is accused of ignoring the Shin Bet whenever its assessments differ from his own preconceptions. In particular the Prime Minister apparently continued to believe that Yasser Arafat, the Palestinian leader, has covertly aided groups carrying out suicide-bomb attacks although his intelligence reports said the opposite.

The system did not supply him with reports that suited his [Mr Netanyahu's] expectations," said the professor. "That is why he decided to focus, during critical decision-making periods, on the people closest to him in his office, whose security experience is rather slim."

As a result, the Prime Minister believed he could delay as long as he wanted on the partial withdrawal of Israeli forces from Hebron without pressure building up among the Palestinians.

The defence establishment appears appalled that Mr Netanyahu believes his own campaign rhetoric to the effect that the previous government was too soft, and raised the expectations of Palestinians and Arabs alike.

His own argument has always been that few concessions should be made. Israel's military superiority emphasised, and the Arabs will be willing to come to an agreement. This has been

contradicted by events of the past few months.

The talk of a coup in Israel is in large part probably an attempt by Professor Ma'oz and the officers to dramatise their discontent with Mr Netanyahu and his policies. The military establishment also feels it must fight off marginalisation: Mr Netanyahu removed senior officers from negotiations with the Palestinians.

Three former generals in the cabinet – Ariel Sharon, Rafael Eitan and Yitzhak Mordechai – are exempted from criticism in what is evidently an attempt to isolate the Prime Minister from his military colleagues.

EC sets rules on stability fund

Sarah Helm
Brussels

The legal apparatus for the single currency began to take shape yesterday when the European Commission proposed a series of legally binding rules and sanctions to keep prospective members of the new Euro zone in line.

Under the proposed laws, based on existing agreements between Europe's finance ministers, the Commission would assume wide-ranging powers to survey tax and public spending in member states, with a view to ensuring countries keep within public-deficit rules.

Ministers of member states, meeting as the European Council, would then have power to impose sanctions if the Commission recommends that a country is stepping out of line. Under the proposed law a country would be warned that its fiscal policy was unsatisfactory, and would then have 10 months to put it straight. The maximum fine the country would face would be 0.5 per cent of gross domestic product.

Although the substance of the proposed laws has already been widely aired, publication of the draft legal texts is likely to set the critics of economic and monetary union on edge. The regulations are the latest evidence that the momentum behind the single currency is building fast.

Furthermore, the regulations will stir new concern in Britain that the single currency will inevitably lead to major diminution in the sovereign powers of member states to decide their own public spending.

The Commission's proposals will primarily affect those countries which do not join the single currency in the first phase. The idea, said Yves-Thibault de Silgny, economic commissioner, is to ensure budgetary stability is maintained after the first group of member states join the single currency.

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international

Expensive mud flies in US Senate campaigns

DAVID USBORNE
Summit, New Jersey

In New Jersey, the agonisings of Bob Dole over how nasty he should get with Bill Clinton seem almost quaint. Nothing Mr Dole might attempt is likely to match the sheer beastliness of the Senate race under way here.

Waged almost entirely on the television airwaves, it is a match-up between a Democrat member of the House of Representatives (and recent boyfriend of Bianca Jagger), Bob Torricelli, and a Republican House member, Dick Zimmer. Each is spending millions - mostly on advertisements denigrating the other.

Indeed, the New Jersey Senate race is on course to become the most expensive in the country. For that reason, and also because of the quantity of mud involved, it is attracting wide national attention. But with Mr Torricelli ahead in polls by only a whisker, it may also prove crucial to the Democratic Party's hopes of retaking the Senate from the Republicans.

The fiercest attacks have come from Mr Zimmer. He has accused his opponent variously of fund-raising at the home of convicted mobster to assisting a fugitive. In turn, Mr Torricelli, 45, has accused Mr Zimmer, 52, of taking cash from a man linked to the Las Vegas mob and of dodging property taxes.

"It's so damn dirty, people are tuning out," notes David Rebovich, a political scientist at Rider University. "They've accused each other of being income tax evaders, influence pedlars and of being affiliated with the Mafia. What are voters supposed to think? One of them is going to be our senator."

Some of the voters indeed seem distressed. "It bothers me," says Bob MacLaughlin, a retired computer systems designer and a resident

of Summit, a mostly Republican suburban enclave west of New York City. "The campaign is all 'you did, I did' and it gets really hard to see through the negativity to understand what is really happening." He is angered by Mr Zimmer's tactics especially and, though he is a registered Republican, will vote for Mr Torricelli.

Mr Zimmer attracted particular criticism for one television slot which featured a fake news broadcast with the news reader listing the various Mr Torricelli "scandals" as if they were genuine news stories. The *Star Ledger* newspaper of Newark decried the commercial as "an abomination".

On policy, the discourse has barely been more elevated. Mr Zimmer is trying to brand Mr Torricelli with the "L" word - liberal. This week his campaign will even launch a page on the World Wide Web about Mr Torricelli's alleged liberal record.

Mr Torricelli has meanwhile attempted to describe Mr Zimmer as a poodle of the unpopular House Speaker, Newt Gingrich, dedicated to slashing public assistance programmes like social security and Medicare. In truth, both candidates are moderates in their own parties. Mr Zimmer favours abortion rights for women, for instance, and Mr Torricelli is harsh on immigration issues.

Reflecting the wider significance of the contest, the Clinton campaign has promised to bring the President to Torricelli's side at rallies next week. Clinton is well ahead of Dole in the state, and his presence might help tip the Senate race to Torricelli.

The notion that the Senate might return to the Democrats is looking less far-fetched than a few weeks ago. With the balance 53 to 47 in the Republicans' favour, the Democrats are hoping to pick off three or four sitting Republicans. But it is critical that Mr Torricelli holds on here.



Deep trouble: Sea World members yesterday rescued a baby humpback whale trapped in a shark net off the coast of Queensland, Australia

Photograph: Reuter

Japanese poll war moves to TV screen

New power for the parties has forced politicians to turn to a previously neglected medium, writes **Richard Lloyd Parry**

Tokyo - Two men, their faces hidden by protective masks, are practising kendo, the traditional Japanese sport of fencing with wooden swords.

Swirls of smoke and occasional inexplicable bursts of flame obscure the action on the television screen but over the noise of the fighting we hear a nasal and naggingly familiar voice.

"I think that Japan lacks dreams. I want to make Japan into a country in which those who strive can be happy." The epic battle is soon over and the victor removes his mask to reveal the features of Ryutaro Hashimoto, the Prime Minister. He looks tired, but determined. "This," he says, "is the new Liberal Democratic Party."

In most countries, the idea of a party political broadcast in which a government leader beats his opponent into submission would be eyebrow-raising and in Japan it is nothing less than extraordinary. Its political culture is comically conservative: campaigning candidates still don white gloves when delivering speeches, and the standard canvassing technique is to drive around

the constituency in a loud-speaker van repeating a single phrase: "Please vote for me."

But Sunday's election, the twentieth since the Second World War, is unlike any others: it is a measure of the panic and confusion it is causing politicians that they are, for the first time, devoting lots of money and energy to television. Until the 1980s, they paid little mind to television, because it had little influence on elections; politics was a local affair in which a candidate's affiliation mattered far less than his reputation within his constituency and the efficiency of his canvassers.

This changed in 1993, when the Liberal Democrats (LDP) lost their 38-year ascendancy to a coalition of reform-minded parties whose one big achievement in its brief tenure was to reform the electoral system. On Sunday voters will mark two ballots. The first will be for an individual candidate in a local constituency, a first-past-the-post system filling 300 of the 500 seats in the lower house of the Diet. The second cross will go alongside the name of a party, and from these votes the rest of the seats will be divided proportionally. For the first time, politicians have to stake their futures on the appeal of an individual party.

The idea was to encourage policy debate and direct competition between the parties, but it has failed. The few big campaign promises - a pledge by the opposition Shinshinto (New Reform Party), for instance, to cut taxes by 50 per cent - are disarmingly vague, and the political vacuum which this leaves is eagerly filled by advertising.

Apart from official slots on NHK, the state broadcasting network, the parties are not allowed to make any mention of the election in their television commercials: the pretence

is that Mr Hashimoto's kendo match is a party promotion, unconnected with the poll. But no one who watches it can be in any doubt about the inferred identity of the masked opponent whom he fells: Ichiro Ozawa, the leader of Shinshinto, Mr Hashimoto's former friend and now his rival.

Broadcasting rules forbid "negative campaigning" but the media campaigns of the two parties contain numerous little digs at one another. The buzzword of Mr Hashimoto's commercials is *yume*, which means dreams, but also has suggestions of fantasy. "Let's create a country in which *yume* can be fulfilled," he gushes. "Shinshinto does not propose the politics of *yume*," runs an opposition slogan.

The LDP is lucky in Mr Hashimoto, a tough, confident politician who genuinely happens to be a kendo black belt. Mr Ozawa, a far less

charismatic performer (a fellow politician once said he resembled "a road which has just swallowed something bitter"), makes few appearances in his party's media campaign. Instead, it has opted for metaphor: its main television advertisement depicts vegetables in a juice-maker, representing the squeeze the government threatens to put on voters with a proposed tax increase.

Neither side will say what it is spending on advertising, although it is rumoured to be £23m for Shinshinto and half that for the LDP, which is concentrating on the "ground battle", the old-fashioned local campaigns run by individual candidates in the constituencies, where the party still enjoys solid support. "An election is a war," said the LDP's public-relations chief, Katsumi Kishimoto. "You have to decide where you are going to concentrate your forces, and for us the ground war is the decisive one."

■ Polls suggest the LDP will come close to recapturing a slim majority in the lower house on Sunday.

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Russia prepares to partner Nato

Tony Barber and Christopher Bellamy

Nato and Russia are moving closer to a "strategic partnership" which may be enshrined in a Nato-Russian charter – a non-aggression and cooperation pact – which will remove Russian objections to Nato's expansion plans.

In the past week the components of a co-operation package, which could include Nato help for Russia outside Europe, have emerged in a series of meetings and conferences. The Russian security supremo Alexander Lebed visited Nato in Brussels last week and there were conferences in Copenhagen and Antalya. A strategic partnership between Nato and Russia – "16 plus one" – will also be discussed during a three-day visit to Russia by William Perry, US Defense Secretary, which began yesterday.

Before he arrived Dr Perry warned Russia that refusal to ratify the Start-2 Treaty would have no effect on Nato's plans to expand to embrace East European countries, and would cost Moscow and Washington billions of dollars. Last week, the former Russian foreign minister Andrei Kozyrev stressed the need for constructive dialogue in a speech in Copenhagen.

"Rather than have a counter-productive debate about whether or not to have enlargement there should be more time devoted to looking for ways to protect Russian interests," Mr Kozyrev said. "Years have been wasted. By now Russia should have cooperated with Nato... Nato will expand and the Russian leadership will have to find a pragmatic solution to that reality."

"There is a real risk that hard-liners in Moscow will present Nato expansion as a humiliation of Russia, not as an achievement. That is because so much time has been wasted in building up a Nato-Russian Treaty. Nevertheless, the general trend towards Nato-Russian co-operation is irreversible."

Co-operation between Nato and Russia is crucial to ensure the implementation of the Start 2 strategic arms treaty, which will reduce superpower nuclear warheads from 6,000 each to fewer than 3,500 each by 2003.

The Russians also want the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty recast to reflect the demise of one of the military blocs that signed it. Nato currently has three times the military strength of the Commonwealth of Independent States countries – the former Soviet Union. The balance will shift to four to one if East European countries join Nato.

Although there is no draft of a Nato-Russian charter, Nato accepts the principle. Nato does not like the idea of a "non-aggression pact" because that implies Nato might have aggressive designs, and the language could be used as an argument against further Nato



Different views: William Perry, right, said refusal to ratify Start 2 would not delay expansion

Photograph: Reuters

expansion. It also wants the document to be non-legally binding, because a legally binding one would have to be ratified by the parliaments of all the Nato countries and Russia.

Such a document would probably be in three parts: a prologue, pledging cooperation and citing laudable aims; a second section pledging consultation on European security issues and possibly the creation of new institutions, and a third

with Mr Lebed last week. He said Nato would accept "neither vetoes nor conditions" on its enlargement. Although Mr Lebed has publicly attacked Nato's expansion to embrace East European countries, General Naumann said they had discussed a triple package relating to the question.

It included Nato enlargement; enhancing the Partnership for Peace initiative involving co-operation with those East European countries including Russia which did not wish to join Nato or might not be in the first wave; and a "real strategic partnership with Russia".

General Naumann said if he were the chief of the Russian general staff he would see possible threats to the west, south and east.

In the west, General Naumann said, "we offer them assurance that Nato will remain calm, that there is no risk. In the south we offer co-operation with Nato."

When questioned on how far south this co-operation would go, General Naumann said the discussions had just embraced the "immediate neighbourhood of Russia as Russia is right now. Nato has no intention of going further south, and has no capabilities to do so."

The co-operation could also extend beyond Europe, into central Asia. The prospect was raised when Mr Lebed visited Brussels last week, it emerged on Saturday. German General Klaus Naumann, the top military officer in Nato's political wing, told the conference in Antalya that he had spent an hour

'Nato will have four times its military strength if East Europe countries join'

section pledging cooperation on detailed issues including drugs, nuclear proliferation and joint exercises.

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Lebed 'plans Legion to smash foes'

Phil Reeves
Moscow

The struggle for supremacy within the Kremlin reached a new ferocity last night when Russia's Interior Minister, Anatoly Kulikov, launched a blistering attack on Alexander Lebed, accusing the security chief of plotting a coup, and of trying to establish a Russian version of the French Foreign Legion, whose duties would include political assassinations.

In a bizarre side drama, the minister also said security forces in cities across Russia had been placed on heightened alert because of the risk of an attack by Chechen fighters, after earlier hinting that Mr Lebed was planning to use separatist support in his quest for power. It was unclear if the two developments were connected.

The two men have been at each other's throats since shortly after Mr Yeltsin appointed Mr Lebed as the secretary of Russia's Security Council, national security adviser, and special envoy to Chechnya. Their rivalry erupted in public when the ex-paratrooper general demanded

General Kulikov's dismissal for mishandling the Chechen war. The Interior Minister counter-attacked by repeatedly lambasting Mr Lebed for striking a deal with the Chechens that he considers a sell-out.

But yesterday's episode was extraordinary, coming only a day after Boris Yeltsin called on his entourage to stop bickering. A spokesman for the President, who is preparing for a heart operation in mid-November, said he was "extremely worried" by General Kulikov's claims, and had demanded to see details. Mr Lebed denied the claims, saying that he intends to sue the minister for one rouble, adding that "the poor thing has got everything wrong".

General Kulikov accused Mr Lebed of planning to establish a 50,000-strong "Russian Legion", modelled on the French Foreign Legion, which would be under his operational control as the head of the Security Council. Quoting documents which he claimed came from Mr Lebed's entourage, General Kulikov said the legion's goal included "neutralising political and armed conflicts".

The general said this included the "liquidation of political and military leaders and the leaders of extremist, terrorist, and separatist movements as well as other organisations whose activities threaten national security".

He also accused Mr Lebed of plotting a "creeping coup", saying that he "had made the final decision to proceed in the near future with the use of force, without waiting for the [next] presidential election".

Mr Lebed said it was no secret that he had asked the Interior and Defence Ministries to set up a single brigade of up to 3,500 people in each region so that "there would be some kind of power in the state".

General Kulikov's allegations will be seen as the result of a struggle for control between the head of one of Russia's "power" ministries – the general has 230,000 forces at his disposal – and the head of a revamped Security Council. But they will strike a nerve among liberals who believe that Mr Lebed has despotic tendencies.

It now seems inevitable that one of the two men will have to leave office.

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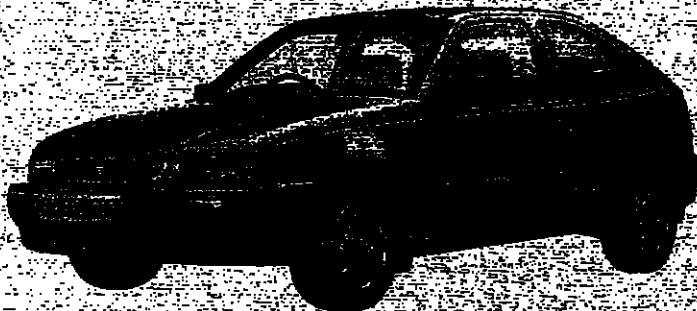
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If the world were a village of 1,000 people, what would it be like? Donella Meadows's curious form of demographics (right) will turn your world-view upside down

Off the road: recapturing the spirit of Kerouac on Desolation Peak (right)



The mystery of the concubine hotline: why are respectable, married Orthodox Jews in Brooklyn being urged to take live-in mistresses? Suzanne Glass reports

Plus: Peter Conrad's interesting encounter with Peter Greenway

IN THIS WEEKEND'S INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY

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international

Electronic bedbugs put the bite back into Berlusconi

Andrew Gumbel
Rome

Silvio Berlusconi is back in the news, thanks to an outbreak of bedbugs. For the past few months the former Italian prime minister, now opposition leader, has done uncharacteristically little to attract attention, perhaps because he is going through two separate corruption trials. But this week the Italian media circus has been all his. It all began with a remarkable

revelation last weekend. The opposition's new headquarters in central Rome, Mr Berlusconi announced gravely to the press, had been invaded by *una cimice* – literally a bedbug, but in this context the slang for an electronic surveillance device. The bug, he said, had been discovered behind a radiator, and he believed that confidential meetings attended only by his closest political allies had been picked up and recorded for the last six weeks or so.

Almost instantly, Mr Berlusconi's allies began slinging wild accusations at the magistrates and at the government, saying that an Italian Watergate was under way. The government, meanwhile, voiced its strong disapproval, with the Prime Minister, Romano Prodi, calling for an urgent investigation into this "uncivil incident unworthy of a decent country".

By yesterday, the government was promising to reform the security services, and the

media was awash with speculation as to the possible culprit. And yet something did not add up. The bug was an old-fashioned device not used by the security services for years. Checks showed that no magistrate had requested any surveillance, at least not officially. Moreover, Mr Berlusconi told the press before going to the police, obliterating possible fingerprint evidence by handling and waving the bug around.

One senior politician, the

Northern League activist and former interior minister Roberto Maroni, accused Mr Berlusconi of a media stunt. Certainly, the tycoon turned politician has been playing the issue for all it is worth.

But Mr Maroni's is not a popular opinion, and most Italian politicians have reacted in the opposite fashion – by insisting that Mr Berlusconi's problem is actually contagious. One minister, Antonio Maccanico, said he was fairly sure he was being

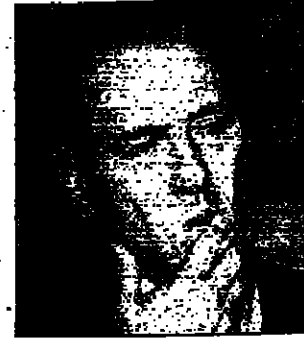
spied on. And Umberto Bossi, leader of the Northern League, claims nine bugs have been found at his headquarters.

The issue taps into every Italian paranoia about the murky activities of the security services and the deeply held conviction dating from the Cold War that the country is not run by elected politicians but rather by occult, invisible forces.

It is hard to imagine, however, who could benefit by listening in on Mr Berlusconi's

political meetings since their contents are usually leaked to the press. Even Mr Berlusconi has admitted he does not himself suspect the security services or other organs of the state.

So who is spying on him? Perhaps the same organisation that has been putting bombs on trains and planes, blowing up historical buildings and staging attempts to assassinate the Pope for the past 25 years; perhaps nobody at all. Chances are, we will never know.



Berlusconi: In the spotlight

Belgian protest goes on despite justice promise

Katherine Butler
Brussels

Belgium's justice minister pledged to reinforce inquiries into the country's child sex and murder scandals yesterday as nationwide protests continued over the sacking of the judge leading investigations.

Seeking to calm the anger generated by the handling of the case, Stefaan De Clerck told a parliamentary committee that a second investigating magistrate would be appointed to the probe.

"Everything is being done to pursue the investigation," he said, adding that 350 people are now working full time on the case sifting through 5,000 videos of child pornography for incriminating evidence.

An outcry followed Monday's high court ruling in which the judge Jean-Marc Connerotte was removed from the case, fuelling suspicions of a political and judicial cover-up. Confidence in the institutions of state has been at best fragile since August when the bodies of four young girls were found buried at houses owned by a convicted rapist, Marc Dutroux.

Accusations of bungling and complicity levelled at the authorities have been led by the families of the victims.

The government is bracing itself for more trouble on Sunday when at least 50,000 people are expected to converge on Brussels in support of Mr Connerotte, who was taken off the case because of alleged bias in

attending a function organised by families of the victims.

The same judge was removed from the inquiry into the murder of the former deputy Prime Minister Andre Cools when in 1994 he signalled he was on the brink of a major breakthrough. The Belgian newspaper, *La Libre Belgique*, suggested yesterday that Mr Connerotte may have tracked down evidence linking senior political figures to the Dutroux affair.

Mr De Clerck denied yesterday that he had brought pressure to bear on the families to drop an appeal against the ruling of the country's highest court to remove Mr Connerotte. The decision to abandon their appeal came after a tense meeting with the minister on Tuesday night.

A second day of spontaneous protests and strikes again underlined the strength of emotion in Belgium following the latest developments. Bus drivers in Charleroi and Namur voted for a one-day strike while 500 steelworkers at a plant near Charleroi, birthplace of Marc Dutroux, stopped work to march past one of his homes in the village of Marcinelle. Roads near Charleroi airport were blocked off by workers from the Sabca Aeronautics factory.

The revelations surrounding the Dutroux affair have, it is believed, served to drive a further wedge between Belgium's already divided linguistic communities, with many Flemings seeking to distance themselves

from the macabre discoveries around Charleroi in French-speaking Wallonia. But the latest wave of discontent has crossed the linguistic divide. Hundreds of students threw eggs and smashed the windows of the law courts in Antwerp, the Flemish capital, while a few miles away in Moechelen demonstrators blocked several of the city's major roads. In Genk, also in Flanders, Ford workers halted production for a spontaneous protest.

The upheavals caused by the Dutroux affair have attracted intense outside attention, another source of dismay for the Belgians whose profile internationally is that of a placid, conformist and law-abiding people.

Mass protest however is not a newly discovered phenomenon. Modern Belgium was born in 1830 after William of Holland tried to force through unpopular reforms on hostile Belgian subjects.

Simmering discontent throughout the winter of 1829 climaxed the following year when in an apparently spontaneous uprising the people of Brussels took to the streets and stormed government buildings.

That sparked the revolution which led eventually to independence.

Similarly mass rallies in the summer of 1950 and a national strike forced the abdication of King Leopold III because he was perceived to have been complicit in the Nazi occupation of the country.



Seeing red: An environmental activist, dressed as a tomato, standing by a wall of cans marked with the bio-hazard sign during a protest against genetically altered food on World Food Day in Berlin yesterday. Photograph: AP

Strikes test French unions' might

Mary Dejevsky
Paris

France's powerful public sector trade unions are staging a one-day strike today that will be closely watched as an indicator of the likely strength of anti-government protest this winter. For the public, the strike is a chance to rehearse techniques perfected during the disruption of last winter: walking to work, car-sharing or a premature start to the weekend.

For the trade unions and the government the day of action is a make-or-break affair. If it is well supported, the protest could escalate to the point where it threatens the survival of the government and the Prime Minister, Alain Juppé. If support is lacklustre, the unions will have to curb their ambitions and the government will quietly proceed with the next stage of its plans to reform the welfare system and pare public spending.

The odds are hard to call. Opinion polls show the public anticipates a large measure of disruption this winter – 87 per cent said they expected widespread strikes – and is generally pessimistic about economic prospects. Workers in sectors hardest hit by spending cuts, defence sector employees and doctors, are angry and militant.

The government has played its cards more cannily than last year. It formally lifted the freeze on public sector pay just before the new round of negotiations began and reduced its estimates of job losses. The two main triggers for last year's strikes – the railway restructuring plan and the inclusion of public sector pension arrangements in welfare reform – were both abandoned last year. The railways are now subject to a gentler reform plan; the plan to standardise pension arrangements has not been revised.

The core of the welfare reform has been retained, but its initial financial effects impinge mainly on doctors. They are prominent in this year's protests, but their protest alone will not disrupt the country.

On paper, at least, today's action will affect most of the public sector. The national and regional railways as well as much urban transport have announced their intention to strike. Most social security offices and government services will be closed. Air traffic controllers have called a partial strike. Gas and electricity workers are to strike, along with some dockyard employees. Many schools could be closed, and unionised doctors will provide an emergency service only.

Hardline Belarus triggers alarm

Phil Reeves
Moscow

Britain and several other European governments have declared their alarm over plans by the hardline President of Belarus to stage a referendum which, if passed, would give him near totalitarian powers, and reverse his country's tentative steps towards democracy.

Acting through their ambassadors in Minsk, Britain, Italy, France and Germany have challenged Alexander Lukashenko over the poll which has caused a hostile stand-off between the President and parliament, prompting fears that a showdown is looming. He has responded angrily by accusing the West of meddling in his nation's internal affairs.

The exchange is a measure of

the growing international concern over Mr Lukashenko's proposed referendum which will give him huge powers over his 10 million population, whose legacy from the Soviet empire includes a nuclear arsenal, a large army, and a strong secret police. "We will have a second Haiti in the centre of Europe," Valery Titkova, chairman of the Constitutional Court, warned recently. "It will be a dictatorship."

Free speech has no more taken root in Belarus than the free market (less than 10 per cent of the economy is privatised), but Mr Lukashenko has tightened his throttle-grip on the media still further as the vote approaches, closing down the only private radio station, and freezing the bank accounts of the already restricted opposition

newspapers. Belarusians who tune into their state-run television channel face a barrage of propaganda in favour of their president, unsullied by alternative views.

Mr Lukashenko, 42, a former collective-farm director, was elected in 1994, after winning support from rural Belarusians who saw him as an old-style party man who would serve as a bulwark against the harsh consequences of switching to a market economy. He has kept most of the old structures intact, beefing up his presidential security service and KGB with recruits from Moscow. But he complains that his efforts to revive his shattered economy have been continuously blocked by the legislature, and the constitutional court, whose rulings he frequently ignores.

If approved, his referendum would create a second, more powerful, legislative chamber under his control (he would have the right to appoint a third of the members, while the rest would be drawn from officials, appointed by his administration). His own term of office would be extended for seven years. He would choose half the constitutional court and half the electoral commission.

The poll – which he wants to hold on 7 November, the anniversary of the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution – is the latest battle in a war which he has waged with parliament for months. Last year, he tried to close down the legislature altogether by urging Belarusians to boycott parliamentary elections, destroying its quorum. But the voters scuppered his scheme by

turning out. This time, amid rumblings that members are moving to impeach him, parliament has counter-attacked by calling its own referendum on 24 November which proposes to make Belarus a parliamentary republic.

Which side will win is a matter of debate. Although Mr Lukashenko controls almost all the media, and has a strong rump of support in the countryside, his opponents – who complain of being harassed and bugged by the security services – say his referendum will only pass if he cheats. They also say it is illegal as only the parliament can set a referendum date.

"There are only two ways he can win," said Stanislav Bogdankevich, an opposition leader, "mounting a *coup d'état*, or falsifying the poll".

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The Sandinista leader turns over a new leaf, but the US is unconvinced

Devil dons a halo for Nicaragua poll battle

Phil Davison
Managua

George Bush once called him a "skunk". His leading opponent calls him "a Marxist devil". But from his new white-shirted choirboy image to his free-market promises, the Sandinista leader Daniel Ortega is a changed man. He even has the politeness to say about the United States, but Washington is not quite convinced by his apparent transformation.

After trailing the conservative candidate, Arnaldo Aleman, all year by up to 20 percentage points in the opinion polls, Mr Ortega, 50, has surged to within three points. He now has a fighting chance of being voted back in as the President of Nicaragua in Sunday's election. If he is, he has promised a "kinder, gentler" Sandinista government than the pro-Moscow regime he led from the 1979 revolution until he was defeated by the conservative Violeta Chamorro in 1990.

Mrs Chamorro is not running this time. Mr Aleman, a bulky 50-year-old former Managua mayor, heads the Liberal Alliance, roughly the same conservative coalition which Mrs Chamorro led to victory in 1990. Mr Aleman is still the favourite. But the polls suggest he may not reach the 45 per cent he needs to avoid a second-round run-off in November. The polls have Mr Aleman scoring around 41 per cent, and Mr Ortega up to 38. Horse-trading by the smaller parties would then tilt the balance one way or another in a head-to-head vote.

Mr Ortega has come a long way from the bespectacled, Yanki-bashing revolutionary of 1979. He now wears contact lenses and has cast off his cowboy shirts with rolled up sleeves for billowing, collarless white shirts that give him an almost-saintly appearance.

His oratory is less fiery, too, partly as a result of a mysterious heart condition which forces him to visit Cuba twice a year for check-ups. The Sandinista anthem, which exhorts their followers to "fight against the Yanki, enemy of humanity" has been "suspended" during the campaign. In its place, Beethoven's *Ode to Joy* with cus-

tomised Spanish lyrics is belted out wherever he goes.

In an attempt to erode Mr Aleman's conservative support, Mr Ortega has enlisted some odd bedfellows. His vice-presidential running mate is Juan Manuel Caldera, a 68-year-old cattle rancher whose farms were confiscated by the Sandinistas in the Eighties.

Campaigning along with them are several of the Sandinistas' old arch-enemies, the American-financed Contra guerrillas who fought Sandinista rule in a bloody war throughout the Eighties. One renowned ex-Contra, known as Comandante Mack, who has been described as "a savage" for his human-rights abuses, has been introducing Mr Ortega at campaign rallies.

The Sandinista leader even tried to recruit a *Yanki* into his campaign. Television commercials showed Mr Ortega posing with a US Democratic congressman, Bill Richardson, apparently an attempt to woo moderate voters who favour a rapprochement with Washington.

The commercial was later pulled off after Mr Richardson and the US government complained, saying the congressman had not given his permission and did not endorse Mr Ortega's candidacy.

Mr Ortega is campaigning on a platform of peace and greater prosperity. He has pledged not to reinstate the military draft, which was in place during his earlier rule because of the war with the Contras and the war of words with the US.

With 75 per cent of Nicaraguans still living in poverty or extreme poverty - it is the second-poorest nation in the hemisphere after Haiti - food and jobs will be the issues that swing the vote. Mr Aleman has pledged to create 100,000 new jobs in his first year in a nation of 4.2 million people where 54 per cent are either unemployed or have only partial or sporadic income.

Street crime, which grew after the end of Contra war and the lifting of the military draft, is another pressing issue. More than 60 violent gangs roam the streets of Managua alone, with names such as the Corpse-eaters, the Skinheads and the Medicine Men.



Fan female: A Nicaraguan woman holds up a poster of candidate Daniel Ortega at a rally in Managua

Photograph: AP

Miss World costume drama

Tim McGirk
New Delhi

First they tried to run the chicken out of town. Now they're after the girls. The same protesters in the south Indian city of Bangalore who recently tried to close down the fast-food giant Kentucky Fried Chicken, are now threatening to sabotage the Miss World pageant.

Sponsors of the contest are taking the threats seriously: the organisers are transplanting the most controversial event in the pageant, in which women slink around in swimming-costumes, out of Bangalore to the beaches of the Seychelles.

Fried-chicken legs and leggy beauties may not appear to share much in common, but for a Bangalore professor of constitutional law, MD Nanjundaswamy, they represent an assault by multi-national companies on Indian values. "The multi-nationals are trying to introduce a meat-and-beer culture in India," the professor, a vegetarian teetotaler, said. He described the pageant as "Rupert Murdoch's occupation of the Indian mind".

The Australian media magnate's satellite television network has for several years now been dumping all the dross of Western soap operas and second-rate films on to India.

Opposition to the Miss World pageant has united Hindus, right-wing Hindus, Muslim militants and feminists in an unlikely alliance. Some have vowed to set themselves on fire if the contest goes ahead.

Others, led by Prof Nanjundaswamy, have threatened to burn the stadium where the contestants will parade before a panel of judges which includes the Briton Eric Morley. Spectators are being charged up to £500 a seat, much more than an Indian labourer earns in a year.

Waqas Ahmed, from the Students of Islamic Organisations, said the contest will "prove detrimental to our delicate social fabric, which is already under onslaught. The display of nudity is against our social values."

India had always shrugged off beauty pageants until last year, when Indians won both the Miss Universe and the Miss World contests. Then India seemed to wake up to its own attractive women. Newspapers and magazines began to fill up with photographs of middle-class girls aspiring to be super-models, instead of dentists and accountants.

Yet it is likely that the Miss World pageant would have been driven out of Bangalore months ago but for the main organiser, Amitabh Bachchan, who is India's best-loved film star, whom few politicians dare to cross. Still, he has decided to move the show to Seychelles in 1997, a year early, rather than face another bomb with the protesters.

significant shorts

Council of Europe lets in Croatia

The Council of Europe admits Croatia next month as its 40th member after a delay over human-rights concerns in the ex-Yugoslav republic. The council, seen as an ante-chamber to the EU, froze Croatia's application in May and set conditions concerning respect of the Dayton peace agreement ending the war in Bosnia, democracy and press freedom. *Rosier - Strasbourg*

Senators back East Timor

Australian senators from across the political spectrum urged their government to end its policy of recognising Indonesian sovereignty over East Timor, the former Portuguese territory it invaded 21 years ago. *Robert Miliken - Sydney*

Move for new Bosnia force

Nato countries instructed their military officials to start work on a possible new peace force for Bosnia to replace the existing mission when its mandate expires on 20 December, an alliance spokesman said. *Rosier - Brussels*

Taliban defy demand to abandon Kabul

Kabul's Taliban rulers rejected an ultimatum by ousted government forces to abandon the capital, and said they had no plans to evacuate the city. The acting "information minister", Amir Khan Mutaqi, said they had enough forces to defend the city. *Rosier - Kabul*

Jet crashes near cruiser

A Swedish Viggen military jet crashed into the Baltic near a Russian nuclear naval cruiser 75 miles from the Swedish island of Gotland. The fate of the pilot was not known; the Russians said that the cruiser *Pyotr Veliky* and a patrol boat were searching for him. The jet was equipped for reconnaissance, according to a Swedish statement. Most Viggens are equipped as fighter jets. *AP - Stockholm*

Kurdish rebels close in on Arbil

Anti-Saddam rebels of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan moved to tighten the noose around the key northern Iraqi city of Arbil and reverse losses in August to a rival faction backed by Baghdad. *Rosier - Barisan Valley*

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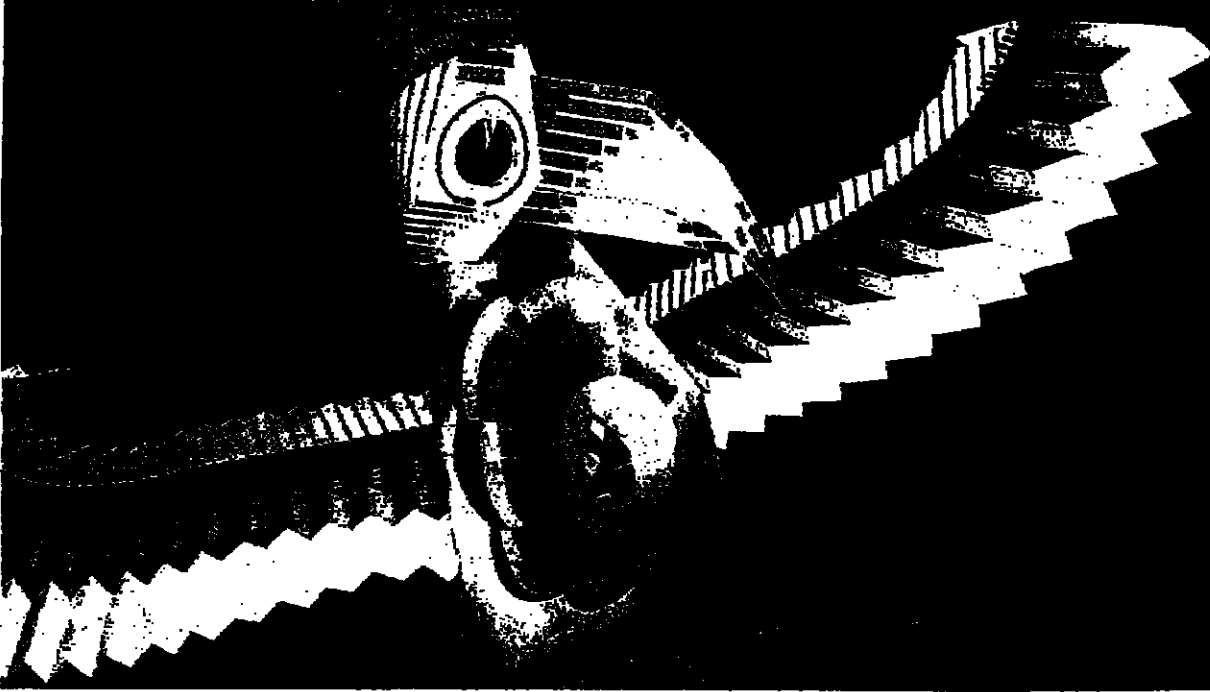
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Laura La Plante

If Laura La Plante in old age had not resembled herself in youth so strongly, I should have suspected an impostor. She was charming, friendly and immensely likeable, but no one would have taken her for one of the most popular stars in film history. For she seemed totally unaffected by the experience; too modest, too forgetful.

When David Gill and I arrived at her home in Rancho Mirage, outside Palm Springs, with a film crew for our *Hollywood* series in 1977, Laura retreated to the kitchen and pleaded not to be interviewed. She knew we'd come to film her husband Irving Asher, producer and silent-era publicist, but she also knew we'd grab something of her if we could. When we realised her reticence was genuine, we relented.

I had tried to chronicle her career during several visits, and while she tried hard to remember, her memory was as bad as she said it was. She could recall exactly what she wore in a picture, but none of the incidents associated with the making of it. But during those visits I grew very fond of her. She had a dry sense of humour; I remember her poring over some photographs with an old friend, the silent actress Bessie Love, trying to remember the names. Eventually she turned to me and said "Care to take a nap?"

She was best-known as a comedienne, and yet her finest performances were in dramatic roles, in two films of 1924 directed by Clarence Brown: *Butterfly*, in which she played a violin student (which was in real life) for whose talent her older sister sacrifices her career; and *Smouldering Fires*, a realistic

drama about an autocratic, middle-aged woman who runs a factory (Pauline Frederick) and falls for a young employee, only to find him pursuing her youthful sister (Laura). The sensitivity of the playing transformed the stereotypical story into a minor masterpiece.

Laura La Plante came from a poverty-stricken background in St Louis, Missouri. Her father was a dance teacher. After her mother divorced him, she moved with Laura and her younger sister Violet to San Diego, California.

As a teenager, Laura spent summer vacations with a cousin, Mary MacMahon, in Hollywood. Mary spotted a newspaper ad asking for children for moving pictures, and Laura was selected and brought home some money. Her mother, who had lost her job, sent her back to the holidays.

Mary MacMahon did all she could for Laura. Next door lived a scenario writer who knew the great director George Loane Tucker, and he was asked to meet Laura. Tucker staged a test in the garden, but Laura felt his cameraman had no film in his camera, because all she got were words of encouragement. Tucker advised her to visit a studio and to watch how things were done. Film-making was a relatively casual affair in 1919, and Laura was able to do just that.

When her cousin moved to an apartment on Gower Street, Laura secured a proper test at the nearby Christie comedy studios. She was noticed by Al Christie and this is Laura's account of the conversation: "How did you get into stock here?" "I didn't..." "Would you



A sort of Carol Lombard of her day: La Plante's dazzling beauty and personality made her Universal's top star (above, in *5th Stockings*, 1927) Photograph: Ronald Grant

like to?" "Yes." "Well, as of Monday, you're in stock." ("He was," explained Laura, "in a very good mood.")

Al Christie cast her in a series based on a newspaper cartoon strip called *Bringing Up Father*. Her first important role was in Charles Ray's *The Old Swimmin' Hole* (1921). Charles Ray was then nearing the end of his career playing wistful, hayseed roles in films deeply nostalgic for a vanishing America. This film was something of an

experiment, being made entirely without subtitles. La Plante's fresh, naturalistic performance won her notice and she thought stardom was assured.

Instead, she was cast by Fox in a western, *Big Town Round-up* (1921) with Tom Mix. Westerns, even with Tom Mix, were regarded as the cheap end, one might almost say the rear end, of the industry, and appearing in them brought little attention. Furthermore, she had to ride a

horse. She couldn't ride, but refused to admit it and the experience brought her nothing but terror.

From Fox she went over to Universal, which was a foolish move because they were were famous for their westerns. La Plante was cast in a relentless series of western two-reelers and five-reelers and even a serial, *Perils of the Yukon* (1922), for which she was expected to do her own stunts, and during which the company were

snowed in on location in the High Sierras. She never learned to ride properly, and was grateful for a brief spell at Goldwyn where she played the prettiest girl in town in Rupert Hughes's *The Wallflower* (1922).

Her career began to take off when she was selected as a Wampas Baby Star of 1923 (Wampas standing for Western Association of Motion Picture Advertisers). The following year she played with Reginald Denny in a motor-racing comedy

called *Sporting Youth*. By now she had dyed her light-brown hair blonde, and her dazzling beauty, together with her personality - humorous, mischievous, but basically sensible and kind - brought her tremendous popularity. She became Universal's top star, a sort of Carol Lombard of her day.

While her favourite films were the comedies she made with Reginald Denny, her most celebrated role, was in *The Cat and the Canary* (1927), a brilliant

parody of Gothic horror directed by the German master Paul Leni.

In 1926 she married William Selter, who had directed the best of her Denny comedies. After playing *Magnolia* in *Show Boat* (1929) - a slick version, later reissued with sound prologue and music and effects - and an appearance in *King of Jazz* (1930), Laura La Plante and Universal parted company.

In 1933 she moved to Europe, and in 1934, after an amicable divorce from William Selter, she married Irving Asher, then in charge of the Warner Bros studios at Teddington. She played in only a handful of the films he produced there, for she was now the mother of two children, Jill and Tony.

When war came, Asher joined the US Army and Laura and the children returned to California. She made a few more appearances on film, played in television and made her last film, *Spring Reunion*, in 1957.

When her son Tony was 16, he was asked what his mother was doing these days. "She's now," he said, "she's just a woman." Laura La Plante may have vanished from public view, but she made a final appearance in New York in *The Night of 100 Stars* in 1985.

Kevin Brownlow

Laura Isabelle La Plante, actress: born St Louis, Missouri 1 November 1904; married 1926 William Selter (marriage dissolved 1934); 1934 Irving Asher (died 1985; one son, one daughter); died Los Angeles 14 October 1996.

Ono Tozaburo

As every British schoolboy should know, from Shelley's *The Masque of Anarchy*, written in 1819 and inspired by the Peterloo massacre, poetry and anarchism make good bedfellows. One of the most distinguished representatives of this marriage was the Japanese anarchist poet Ono Tozaburo, whose life was one of perpetual poetic protest and revolutionary insubordination, attacking both traditional Japanese ways of life and traditional Japanese poetry, chiefly in the *waka* or *tanka* form.

It may surprise some to learn that there is a strong natural anarchist tendency in Oriental culture, but certain elements of anarchism can be found in Lao Tzu, and in the 18th-century

Japanese thinker Ando Shōeki. During the Meiji Period (1868-1912), the theories of Prince Kropotkin and Mikhail Bakunin were introduced into Japan, along with socialist and communist philosophies. Several Japanese groups were formed, both violent and non-violent. One of my ancestors, Thomas Kirkup, in his *History of Socialism* (1892), writes that the Tolstoyan anarchist Dr Kotoku, together with his wife and 10 followers, was executed after a secret trial in 1911.

It is believed there was an actual bomb... but no evidence was forthcoming to justify such savage and wholesale punishments. The whole episode appears to be a blot on the fair fame of Japanese civilisation, which must be regretted by the many admirers of that interesting nation.

Ono Tozaburo was born in Osaka, an industrial city which at the beginning of the century was in the throes of a violent economic and industrial upheaval, with accompanying social unrest and political agitation. The future anarchist poet of industrial landscapes of total desolation attended middle school, and fortunately part of his early childhood was passed in the lovely temple city of Nara.

In 1920 he made his way to Tokyo and entered the university. But, like so many of Japan's modern poets and artists, he dropped out after only eight months. There is something in the Japanese artistic temperament that does not take to further education, a rebellious

spirit, a natural anarchy found in many modern works in conflict with accepted notions.

Tozaburo, as if instinctively, gravitated towards the anarchist-socialist groups of the time, fully aware of the dangers lying in wait for those "mad" that refuse to be hammered down at the hands of the authorities. In 1923, he became a contributor to the newly founded *Aka to Kuro* ("Red and Black") anarchist magazine. Like most publications of its kind, it was suppressed, and ceased publication in 1924. To take its place, Tozaburo founded his own Dadaist-anarchist journal *Dam*, which predictably had only one issue.

The Dada movement in poetry and art was becoming popu-

lar in Japan, but no publisher could be persuaded to issue Tozaburo's first collection of poems, *Hanbun Hiraio Mado* ("A Half-Opened Window"), so he published it at his own expense in 1926. He also took the risk of issuing another anarchist magazine, *Dando* ("Trajectory"), which ran for a whole year (1930-31), in association with his fellow anarchist poet Kiyoshi Akiyama.

In 1933 he returned to Osaka. The industrial landscapes of Osaka and Osaka Bay form the backgrounds of many of his later poems. Here in the inter-war period he became the acknowledged leader and teacher of younger poets. He gradually shifted to the Marxist-realist position in his *Furuki Sekai no*

use ni ("Above the Old World", 1934) and *Osaka* (1939). He also took up literary criticism with a socialist tendency, with which he was able to exert a major influence. He published successive essays in the magazine *Bunka Shinhiki* ("Organisation of Culture", 1940-43) which were collected in *Shiron* ("Essays on Poetry", 1947). He sought to reject musical quality and replace *tanka*-type lyricism by a visionary verse founded on a critical and rational spirit. His post-Pacific War collections include *Daikoku* ("The Ocean's Edge", 1947), *Hi-nomu Keyaki* ("Fire-Swallowing Zelkova", 1952), *Juyu Fuji* ("Heavy Oil Fuji", 1956) and *Ikyo* ("Strange Land", 1966).

Sadly, in later years, with the decline of Japanese interest in literature, he became somewhat neglected. He appears in a very few anthologies of modern Japanese poetry, and is missing from our own *Penguin Book of Japanese Verse* - in so many ways an unsatisfactory compilation. However, he is well represented in my own recently published anthology *Burning Grasses* (University of Salzburg Press). Beside is an example of one of my translations of his poems, from *Daikoku* (1947).

James Kirkup

Ono Tozaburo, poet and anarchist: born Osaka, Japan 27 July 1903; died Osaka 10 October 1996.

Tomorrow

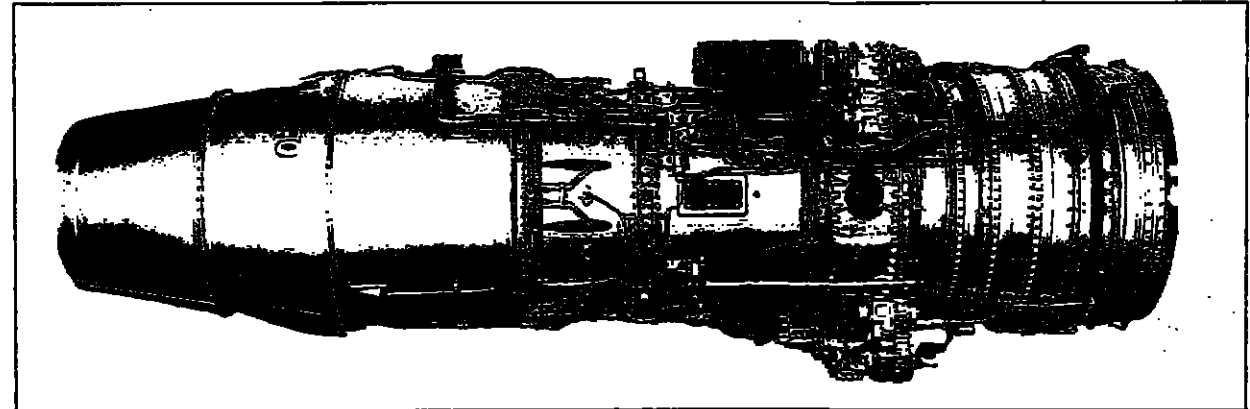
The old roads are dead
And the new shoots are few.
Sandpipers are looking like clouds
across the river mouth.
Wild geese are sweeping the sand-banks where
The spring tides claim up and down
In this deserted and desolate landscape
I listen to the wind howling over the
wastes of heavy industry.
- Surely something must have gone wrong.
Already it is worse than anything
I can imagine.
What I see before me is a ghastly
landscape of waste lands
everywhere.
Without sunlight without sound.
The indelible shadows of an
horizon buried
in iron, nickel, rubber, nitrogen,
magnesium.

P. A. Soloviev

In the Soviet Union it was usual for aircraft and their engines to be designated according to the leader of the design team. P. A. Soloviev remained for many years almost unknown in the Western world, because most of his engines were designated by a simple letter D, from *dvigatel* ("engine").

Born in 1917, Pavel Aleksandrovich Soloviev (pronounced "Solovoy") was from childhood interested in everything mechanical. From high school he entered the Aviation Technological Institute at Rybinsk (today Andropov). He graduated with distinction in 1939, and joined the OKB (experimental construction, or design, bureau) of Arkadya D. Shvetsov at Perm.

Shvetsov was the first aero-engine designer to set up his own OKB in the Soviet Union. His firstborn, the simple M-11 radial engine of 100hp, remained in production over 40



Soloviev's D-30 series I engine; first put into service in the Tu-134 airliner in 1967, there are still over 1,000 in use around the world

years, more than 130,000 being built.

But by the time Soloviev joined there was a need for engines of far greater power for fast fighters and bombers. Soloviev played a leading role in developing the M-82 (redesignated in Shvetsov's honour as

the ASH-82 in 1941), an air-cooled radial in the 1,500-2,000hp class. It was one of the most important engines of what Russians call the Great Patriotic War, and over 70,000 of them were built.

In 1946 Soloviev played a leading part in the development

of the most powerful piston engine ever to be installed in an aircraft, the ASH-2K of 4,700hp. He also worked on other engines, such as the ASH-21 of 550-700hp, which is still in use in aeroplanes and helicopters.

In 1953 Soloviev succeeded

Shvetsov as chief constructor of the Perm OKB. He recognised that, by this time, aircraft requiring high power would use not piston engines but gas turbines. Some piston-engine designers, especially in the Western world, found it hard to learn the very different tech-

nology, with exceedingly complex problems of aerodynamics and combustion and a range of new materials. Soloviev accepted the challenge with enthusiasm.

He immediately began the design of the first turbofan to go into service and a turboshaft engine of unprecedented power for a giant helicopter. Soloviev had studied the writings of Frank Whittle, who had pointed out that the propulsive efficiency of a jet engine would be increased if the airflow through it could be increased and the jet velocity reduced. Accordingly he produced the D-20P, a neat turbofan with a mass flow of 293 pounds per second and take-off thrust of 11,905 pounds. To the astonishment of Western designers, this beat their turbofans into service in the Tu-124 jetliner on 2 October 1962.

The turboshaft engine was the D-25V, which delivered

5,500hp at a time when the most powerful helicopter engine in the Western world was a piston engine rated at 1,900hp. Two D-25Vs made possible the Mi-6 helicopter of 1957. Over 800 of these monsters were built, and even today the Western world has no helicopter with anything remotely similar in size and capability.

Having cut his teeth with these two engines, Soloviev went from strength to strength. The D-30 designation was, with typical Russian mentality, used for two completely different families of engines, one for the Tu-134 jetliner (in the 15,000-pound thrust class and the other (for various big jet transports) rated at 24,000-26,500 pounds. To confuse things still further, the derived D-30F6 is a monster fighter engine, with an afterburner, with a combat thrust rating of 41,843 pounds.

Soloviev's final achievement

was the PS-90, a giant turbofan of high bypass ratio for advanced passenger and cargo transports. A family of PS-90 engines are now flying in the 35,000lb class. What their designer did not expect is that in today's former Soviet republics they are having to compete with Western engines.

Soloviev gained a professorship in 1960, was made a Hero of Soviet Labour in 1966, was appointed a doctor of technical science in 1973 and a corresponding member of the USSR Academy of Sciences in 1981. Also in 1981 he reached the supreme industrial rank of General Constructor. He remained in this until he retired in 1989, handing over to Yuri E. Reshetnikov.

Bill Gunston

Pavel Aleksandrovich Soloviev, aeroplane engine designer: born 1917; died Perm, Russia 13 October 1996.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Queen receives the Raphael (Galleries at the Victoria and Albert Museum, South Kensington, London SW7). The Duke of Edinburgh, Prince of Wales and Mrs. Diana, Princess of Wales, attend the 19th Biennial of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, 1996, at the Royal Albert Hall, London SW7. The Princess Royal, Duchess of Gloucester, attends the 19th Biennial of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, 1996, at the Royal Albert Hall, London SW7. The Princess Royal, Duchess of Gloucester, attends the 19th Biennial of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, 1996, at the Royal Albert Hall, London SW7. The Princess Royal, Duchess of Gloucester, attends the 19th Biennial of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, 1996, at the Royal Albert Hall, London SW7.

Changing of the Guard
The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am.

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS Births, marriages, deaths, divorces, bereavement notices, and other notices, should be sent to the Gazette Editor, 11, Abchurch Lane, London EC4N 3DF. Telephone 0171-255 5555. Fax 0171-255 5555. E-mail: gazette@bt.com. Closing date for notices: 11.55am on the day of publication. Notices must be submitted in writing (or faxed) and are charged at £10 a line, VAT extra. Please include a daytime telephone number.

Forthcoming marriages

Mr M. Sutcliffe and Miss H. Wallace
The engagement is announced between Mark, youngest son of Mr and Mrs John Sutcliffe, of Great Broughton, North Yorkshire, and Henrietta, daughter of Mr and Mrs Ian Wallace, of Edinburgh.

Birthdays

Mr Stephen Bishop-Kovacevich, concert pianist, 50; Mr Harry Carpenter, broadcaster, 71; Mr Sydney Chapman MP, 61; The Earl of Dalhousie, former Governor-General, Rhodesian Federation, 82; Mr Alan Garner, author, 62; Sir Ralph Gibson, a former Lord Justice of Appeal, 74; The Right Rev Ronald Goodchild, Assistant Bishop, Exeter, 80; Mr Jean Guéguinou, French ambassador, 55; Sir Christopher Harding, chairman, BET, 57; Mrs Ann Jones, tennis player, 58; Lord Kilbracken, author and journalist, 70; Mr Michael Lord MP, 58; Sir Carmichael Mackintosh, producer of stage musicals, 50; Mr Arthur Miller, playwright, 81; Mr Bernard Taylor, former chief executive, Glaxo, 61; Sir Simon Tuckey, High Court judge, 55.

Anniversaries

Births: John Wilkes, political reformer and journalist, 1727; Eleanor Glynn, novelist, 1864; Baroness Karen

Bixen (Isak Dinesen), author, 1885;

Rita Hayworth (Margarita Carmen Cansino), actress, 1918. Deaths: Sir Philip Sidney, poet, soldier and courtier, 1586; Frédéric-François Chopin (Frédéric Franciszek), composer, 1849; Sidney Joseph Petherman, humorist, 1979. On this day: British and French forces began the Siege of Sebastopol, 1854; a steel-making process was patented by Sir Henry Bessemer, 1855; Al Capone, a bootlegger, was sentenced to 11 years in jail for income-tax evasion, 1931; the first nuclear power station in the world was opened at Calder Hall, 1956. Today is the Feast Day of St Anastasia or Anastase, Saints Elibert and Elibert, St Ignatius of Antioch, St John the Dwarf, St Nohelm, St Rulf, St Scraphino and The Ursuline Martyrs of Valenciennes.

Lectures

Royal Society of Literature: Andrew Davies and Sue Birrell, "Taking a Plunge with Mr Darcy: adapting classic novels for television", 7pm.

Dinners

Foreign and Commonwealth Office Mr Malcolm Rifkind QC MP, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, held a dinner yesterday evening at 1 Carlton Gardens, London SW1, in honour of Senator Abel Matutes Juan, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Spain.

Police can be liable under Race Discrimination Act

LAW REPORT

17 October 1996

Farah v Commissioner of Police for the Metropolis Court of Appeal (Lord Justice Peter Gibson, Lord Justice Otton, Lord Justice Hutchison) 9 October 1996

Police officers provided services to the public within the meaning of section 20(2)(g) of the Race Relations Act 1976 and acted unlawfully if in so doing they discriminated against a person on the grounds of race. But a chief officer of police was not vicariously liable under the Act for the discriminatory actions of his subordinates.

The Court of Appeal allowed an appeal by the Metropolitan Police Commissioner against the decision of Judge Harris, sitting in Central London County Court on 21 December 1995, refusing to strike out parts of the statement of claim of the plaintiff, Zeinab Farah.

The action arose out of an occurrence on 17 July 1994. The plaintiff, a refugee from Somalia then aged 17, claimed she and her 10-year-old cousin

were attacked near their home by some white teenagers, who set a dog on her and injured her. The police officers who responded to her 999 call, instead of helping her and seeking to detain her attackers, arrested, detained and charged her with affray, common assault and causing unnecessary suffering to a dog. She was released on bail the same day. On 12 January 1995 she appeared to answer the charges and, no evidence being offered, was acquitted.

In her claim against the Commissioner for damages, including aggravated and exemplary damages, for false imprisonment, assault and battery and malicious prosecution, the plaintiff included an allegation that the officers' conduct amounted to unlawful racial discrimination. It was this last allegation which the Commissioner sought to strike out.

Section 20 of the 1976 Act provided:

(1) It is unlawful for any person concerned with the provision... of goods, facilities or services to the public or a section of the public to discriminate against a person who seeks to obtain or use those goods, facilities or services... (2) The following are examples of the facilities and services mentioned in subsection (1):... (g) the services of any profession or trade, or any local or other public authority.

Section 53 provided: (1) Except as provided by this Act no proceedings, whether civil or criminal, shall be brought against any person in respect of an act by reason that then act is unlawful by virtue of a provision of this Act. It was contended for the Commissioner that section 20 did not apply to police officers performing the duties of their office, since they were not providing a service; and that even if it did, the Commissioner himself could not be vicariously liable for breaches of section 20 by his constables.

Robert Seabrook QC and Duncan

MacLeod (Metropolitan Police Solicitor) for the Commissioner, Andrew Nicol QC and Heather Williams (Deighton Guedalla) for the plaintiff.

Lord Justice Hutchison said that, *prima facie*, section 20 was wide enough to apply to at least some of the acts undertaken by police officers in the performance of the duties of their office. The crucial words were "any person concerned with the provision (for payment or not) of... services to the public". These words were entirely apt to cover those parts of a police officer's duties involving assistance to or protection of members of the public. There was nothing in the examples in section 20(2) that expressly or impliedly excluded police officers from the ambit of section 20(1). In his Lordship's view they fell within paragraph (g). There was no reason why a person performing a public duty might not also be providing a service.

Paul Magrath, Barrister

John Wilkes

Ban all handguns now. There's nothing to lose

Death in Dunblane created an emergency that only a complete ban on the private ownership of handguns can begin to dissipate. Lord Cullen's inquiry served to intensify it as, during the past weeks, from the back benches have dropped some odd fowl – shootists more wedded to their pistols than any notion of propriety or public safety, and Warren Hawkesley MP. Yesterday Lord Cullen proposed a half-measure, out of a touching anxiety for the economic well being of the gun industry. His anxiety, however, was utterly beside the point. The Government, also, has missed the point. The ban on private holding of handguns should be complete and exceptionless. Ministers seemed yesterday to think they deserved applause for going beyond Cullen, showing only how far they are still afflicted by post-Dunblane myopia. The course is now clear: a complete ban. The sooner it is effected the better.

A complete ban would be a drastic extension of state power into private liberty – that is true. But there is no shortage of historical precedent for democratic governments responding to threat by far-reaching legislation, increasing surveillance and inspection deep in society's innards. Indeed, there are many more worrying instances than the one we propose. The first Defence of the Realm Act was passed

by a Liberal government convinced – in the context of the Great War – its extension of government's sphere was justified by the emergency. It wanted to protect a way of life. So it is with handgun control. Banning private ownership of lethal weaponry should be aimed at restoring a status quo in which a less twitchy and frightened society has less need of that apparatus of state power symbolised by the armed police officer. Fewer guns would mean less government.

There is nothing ideological about such a ban: it is a practical response in a special circumstance. Just as there is no logic of history pushing the boundaries of the state ever forward (something the hysterics of the new right like to frighten themselves with), so there is no grand logic driving violent crime upwards. We can and must try to make this country more peaceful. It is historically naïve to say British society is "naturally" pacific. What is true is that since the 17th century government has had a pretty effective monopoly on firepower: when Georgians or Victorians rioted they threw stones because all the muskets were secure inside army barracks. By the 20th century that tradition had bedded down into a widespread popular revulsion at the ownership and handling of destructive weapons. Guns are un-British. That sentiment is, of course, flawed: there are large numbers of illegally held



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weapons. And the tradition is threatened, by boundaries open to trade with countries with laxer rules. But being anti-gun remains part of this country's social ecology. This is a moment to affirm that aspiration of civic peace.

There are, yes, important points to consider when it comes to proscription – arguments that even the tears of grieving parents cannot dissolve. One of the strongest is John Stuart Mill's plea for liberty: action should remain free up to the point where it harms others. On that basis, the Government might seek to rest its case for allowing guns to be stored at clubs where, in pri-

vacy, shooting and the handling of guns ought to threaten no one but their owners. But whatever merit it has in theory, it fails the test of practice. How secure will those armories be? How are the weapons to be transported for competitive shooting? A blanket ban is simpler to administer, and is therefore certain to be more effective.

What is lost thereby? The pleasure of a handful of enthusiasts only. Though sport has in recent years moved to the centre of our culture as a source of entertainment and inspiration for many, it must not become a fetish. The loss of British participation

at the Olympics in pistol shooting is hardly going to dent the national medals tally.

And what is gained? To ban handguns is to show, for once, that this country's Parliament is not entirely the creature of special interests and paid lobbyists. There is nothing new about lobbying for legislative favour. What is new is the shamelessness with which lobbyists parade their parliamentary agents, the loudness with which they squeal their sectional case. In the terrible sadness of Dunblane something wonderful was born. The symbol of the snowdrop now adorns a movement of moral force that has shamed even the tired and discredited ministers of the present government into doing very nearly the right thing.

If ever an event proved the shallow self-regard of that Eighties formulation "there is no such thing as society", it was the human response to the death of those children and their teacher in Dunblane. From it, around a core of bereaved parents, there has grown a voluntary organisation whose voice now commands the political centre stage. There are those who continue to resist a blanket ban on handguns, sincerely worried by nanny having to take things away in case we are tempted to misuse them. They fear this means infantilisation. Let them stand a moment alongside those parents in Snowdrop and observe their calm and

adult demeanour. The parents' arguments have won not only because they are right, but because in their capacity to translate their grief into practical democratic reform, they represent recuperative human spirit at its awesome and inspiring best.

Little tiddlers? No, whoppers

ASTONISHING. Andrew Neil, sometime editor of the national newspaper *The Sunday Times*, thinks he's a little guy tilting against the powerful Establishment. Even more amazing, he and Peregrine Worsthorne believe Rupert Murdoch has been bashing the old elite in the interests of the little guy, too. As if Murdoch's media empire, and the editors that dance within it, have not long had more influence than any individual inside Buckingham Palace, Downing Street, Whitehall or the elite universities and public schools. Rupert Murdoch and Andrew Neil are ace players of the oldest Establishment game in the book: using power to sustain their own wealth and privileges. They have never done anything to subvert Britain's most powerful institutions. They are one of Britain's most powerful institutions.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Arts Council works well just as it is

Sir: David Lister ("Better Mrs B than a bunch of hives", 15 October) questions the accountability of the arm's-length principle of arts funding and lays the blame for failure to resolve funding crises in the arts at the door of the Arts Council.

There is indeed a case for directly elected representatives taking on responsibility for the distribution of the money that Parliament votes for the support of the arts.

However, in the real world I suspect that if this were done, it would not be very long before some new arm's-length-style body would have to be invented.

The reason for this is twofold. In the first place, the Council includes among its members arts practitioners of the highest quality, in turn they receive expert advice from panels of arts professionals. Second, Council members and advisers give their services free. It would be difficult, and very expensive, for the Civil Service to undertake this work without adding considerably to its own overhead.

Further, it is not true that there is no connection with elected representatives, as local government is an essential component in the structure of the Regional Arts Boards, all of whose 10 chairmen serve as members of the Arts Council. The Secretary of State of the day, who appoints members of the Council for fixed terms, is accountable to Parliament.

As for accusations that members of the Council do, on occasion, have professional interests which benefit under the Lottery, this is indeed a sensitive and difficult issue. Stephen Dorrell, when he was Minister, answered it best when he said that for civil servants to administer the lottery system was the only alternative, and by definition this excluded practitioners. Some trust is necessary, and we have rigorous procedures which ensure that nobody affected by an award or associated closely with others affected can take any part in the discussion or decision-making process.

David Lister seems to blame the Arts Council for what I agree is the increasingly untenable imbalance between current funding under a steadily reducing Treasury grant and the large sums being made available for capital purposes under the Lottery.

On present form we are likely to find ourselves in a position where we have severely to restrict the activities of theatres, orchestras, opera companies and the like, which have only just received many millions for the provision of handson new facilities from the Lottery. The funding system will look at best incompetent, at worst insane.

In the end we all know that improved facilities, as well as the welcome new directions which allow arts organisations to bid for "software" funding through the Lottery, will make a difference to revenues, but this will necessarily not be felt for two or three years. We have to persuade the Government to help us to get from where we are to where we need to be.

And it is a pity that those like David Lister, who take a welcome and continuing interest in the arts, should be diverted by some constitutional debate from drawing



Michael Heath's Britain: Christie's Auction House – site of the Camilla Parker-Bowles sale

attention to the acute position in which we find ourselves.

LORD GOWRIE
Chairman, The Arts Council of England
London SW1

Sir: The proposed New Museum of Art and Sculpture Park for Wales, designed by David Chipperfield and sited in the parkland of Powis Castle in Welshpool, is in danger of becoming the next lottery casualty in Wales, following the recent "fiasco" over the Opera House in Cardiff, which was also the subject of an international competition.

The Mid Wales Centre for the Arts Trust has carefully planned the project over the past five years, the culmination of this being the full planning permission granted earlier this year. Everything is in place for this outstanding scheme to bring £20m of investment to one of the most culturally neglected areas of Wales, bringing in its wake prosperity to the town of Welshpool.

On 18 October the Arts Council of Wales will decide on the lottery funding for the development of the museum. It will have to face the fact that the new local authority, Powys County Council, has denied the project partnership funding and refused to accept the obligation to the scheme it inherited from the former Montgomeryshire District Council.

The request to Powys is for an additional £14,000 over and above last year's revenue grant to the Trust. This is a minute fraction of the local authority's leisure budget.

The local authority must reconsider its position if all the time, effort and money already

spent on this scheme is not to be wasted. We believe that the Arts Council of Wales must show vision and support for this new visual arts complex which will help to put Wales firmly on the international artistic map. The local authority funding will surely follow.

LORD ELIS THOMAS
SEANI RHYS JAMES
ZAHARA HADID
MAUREEN KELLY OWEN
ANDREW LOGAN
DAVID NASH
Professor IVOR RICHARDS
KYRIN WILLIAMS RA
Mid Wales Centre for the Arts
Welshpool, Powys

Sir: In his article on Mrs Bottomley and her views on the arts (15 October), David Lister once again used that unattractive word "lives". However it is used, the word carries with it an implication of superficiality and condescension.

It would be refreshing if we could drop it – what is wrong with "artists"? The work of an artist is demanding and challenging, as the process of creation and recreation requires a level of imagination and self-discipline that many other professions in public life would find impossible to emulate – even if they make far more money! Let us be proud of what artists of all kinds do to enrich and stimulate our lives.

IAN HORSBRUGH
Principal, Guildhall School
of Music & Drama
London EC2

Mustard gas far from phosphates

Sir: I read the two letters by Charles Secrett and Dr K Vela Ragnarsdottir (12 October) with astonished disbelief.

Organophosphates are very dangerous chemicals but they are not related to mustard gas. So far as I know, mustard gas is made from ethylene and sulphur chloride – no phosphorus. Chlorofeniphos and propylphosphos are both organophosphates and contain phosphorus.

While it is almost certain that people using or being exposed to any of those substances might be poisoned – both acutely and cumulatively (OPs are gradually metabolised and broken down in the body, but chronic toxicity can occur) the two OPs are schedule III poisons: "Rubber gloves, a coverall and face-shield must be worn when handling concentrate."

Other objections to the letters are numerous, but I will cite only one. What evidence is there of BSE being caused by OPs? Scrapie was present in sheep 40 to 50 years before OPs were invented.

A L WINFIELD
Retired entomologist
Ashford, Kent

Climate gamble

Sir: "UK will profit by global warming" (report, 10 October)? Well, possibly for a period, until it gets ever hotter, but only if we ignore hardships elsewhere and if

the climate trends assumed in the economic analysis turn out to be accurate. Unlike the real world, modelled climate scenarios tend to be rather simplistic, with slow and steady trends in temperature and related weather factors – and therein lies a risk. It is not unknown for natural systems to "flip" from one set of broadly stable conditions to another set, over a relatively short period of time.

The scenarios leading to "feelgood" predictions such as those you report ignore the possibility of rapid changes. These would make life much more difficult for the UK and others than the headline suggests, but unfortunately we have only a very limited understanding of the probability or timing of such events in relation to climate change.

Policy-makers thus appear to be being encouraged to gamble for very high stakes, at uncertain odds, rather than adopt a precautionary approach that could itself stimulate the economy.

TONY ROBSON
Cheltenham, Gloucestershire

Runcie and gays

Sir: In my review of Lord Runcie's recent biography (28 September) I stated that Lord Runcie had once referred to homosexuals as "emotional cripples". Lord Runcie assures me that he has never used such an expression, which he believes his gay friends would find "very offensive".

MICHAEL DE-LA-NOY
Hove, East Sussex

Investors prove Britain's success

Sir: Alan Milburn's letter (16 October) tries to talk down the British economy's recovery. This is flogging a very tired horse.

Out in the real world, the British economy is racing ahead. Business investment is now second only to Japan in the G7 and accounts for a higher percentage of national income than it did in 1979.

Labour's obsession with league tables cannot hide the fact that all the current data points to the long-term economic fundamentals being right.

Why else would the IMF have said this year that Britain's performance is "enviable"?

To suggest that Britain is losing out in international competitiveness is laughable. Overseas investors are voting with their cheques. Inward investment created over 50,000 new jobs last year and amounted to over £25bn. These companies come here to succeed.

MICHAEL JACK
Financial Secretary to the Treasury
London SW1

Time out of joint

Sir: Why is it that British Summer Time ends on 27 October, eight weeks before the shortest day, but recommences fourteen weeks after 21 December, on 30 March? By that time it is getting light at 5.40am, when few of us are awake to enjoy it. We should get our longer, brighter evenings beginning eight weeks after the shortest day, ie towards the end of February.

DANIEL DENNIS
London SW15

The great rail inquiry disaster

Sir: Saturday, King's Cross ("Rail gets its lines crossed", 16 October). Attempt to get copy of London to Cambridge winter timetable, which began two weeks ago. None left. They only sent us a few. You'll have to get one from Cambridge.

Monday, Brighton: Manage to get timetable for trains out of Brighton. For timetable, read "timetables". Instead of one, I now have to have four.

Monday, Cambridge: Discover why I have to walk 200 yards from station to taxi rank. Taxi driver tells me Railtrack tried to triple British Rail's charges for picking up outside station.

Tuesday, Cambridge: Phone local train inquiries – referred on to national number. Phone national number, recorded voice tells me: "No information available to callers from London" (but I'm phoning from Cambridge!). Referred on to a London number: permanently engaged. In desperation, phone old Network South East information number; get through after five-minute wait.

Yes, Sir George Young, you have every right to your complacency. Privatisation is succeeding more triumphantly than anyone could have expected. By starving travellers of information and throwing multiple inconveniences in their paths, your fragmented and incompetently managed rail services will soon achieve the ultimate in privatisation – a mass retreat to the private car.

JOHN FIELD
Cambridge

Sir: Further to your article about the problems of telephoning railway timetable inquiries, I have just made a local phone call from my computer to CompuServe.

In 45 seconds I had all the times of trains from my local station to the next one down the line. In a further 10 seconds I had all the trains from Minsk to Brindisi (two randomly chosen places). It included all the places where I had to change, how long I had to wait and what facilities were available on the six different trains I would have to use.

Why is it so efficient? The service is provided by Deutsche Bahn AG. Sadly, it doesn't at present include prices, but I have no doubt that this will soon come.

ROY TIPPING
Bedford

Language Norm

Sir: It is an absurd daydream to hope that the world will accept English as the international language (letter, 15 October).

Even within Europe there is occasional chaos. At one European Union meeting, a French speaker said that to find a solution they needed "la sagesse normande". This was translated as: "We need Norman Wisdom."

Esperanto is a proved, practical and simple solution.

CONNOR WALSH
London SW15

Sizzling wigs

Sir: Now that *The Independent* boasts a tabloid section, can we expect an increased interest in the sexual preferences of public figures? Your headline "Senior judges turn on Major" (9 October) was a nasty shock.

C BLACKER
Ston Easton, Somerset

interview

Reunited after 30 years

Clare Short and her son Toby talk exclusively to Suzanne Moore about the pain of separation and the pleasure of coming to know one another



Clare Short and her son, Toby Graham, yesterday

Clare Short says she has never felt happier. She is glowing with pride as she introduces me to her son Toby and is delighted when I say I can see the resemblance. Toby Graham is the son she had to have adopted when she was a 19-year-old student at Birmingham. Now he is a 31-year-old solicitor working in the city and married with two children himself.

Clare had always dreamed that one day he would come back to her, and now that he has they sit arm in arm throughout the interview, answering each other's questions, finishing off each other's sentences, laughing and hugging, hugely happy just to be in each other's company.

"We've got the same hands, the same veins, the same insides. Look," says Clare. Both she and Toby show me their wrists to see if I can see the similarity they can see. They are still excited by this. After all, as Toby explains, this is only their

ninth meeting. They have only been reunited for four weeks.

Before then, the last time Clare saw her son was when she handed over the six-week-old Toby to a private adoption agency. A few months after her 18th birthday in 1964, and in her first year at university, she found herself pregnant.

Her first thought was "My parents". She adds: "I come from a Catholic family, you know. I wrote to them. They were on holiday in Ireland. I wrote them separate letters and Mum confiscated the one to Dad so he didn't ever read my letter. They were very different times. Now I'm very close to my mother. She lives with me in Birmingham and we talk about everything. But then... She couldn't talk about such things so there wasn't much talk. No one shouted at me but there it was, a *fait accompli* - we got married."

She married Toby's father in 1964, before the baby was born. They were together for seven years.

Was abortion ever an option?

"It wasn't legal but upper-middle-class people used to go to Harley Street," says Clare. "My family would never have agreed so I didn't really contemplate it. I suppose I did, but I was under 21 so I would have had to get permission. I wouldn't consider asking them."

During the pregnancy Clare began to realise how hard it would be. "We were living in a cut-off place. I thought: 'I'm never going back to university, that it would be terrible all round, terrible for the baby, that there would be no money, that what I was doing was best for everybody. When they came to take him it was terrible. It's been terrible ever since.'"

Clare, with the support of her husband, had contacted a private adoption agency, who "leapt at the idea". Clare can remember little from this time. It is as if the memories are so painful they have been wiped away.

She says later: "I didn't really know what I was doing. I

thought it was all just rational, and by the time my emotions were there it was too late. That's the terrible thing, not knowing emotionally what I was doing. It started as soon as he went. I hated it, so it's astonishing that I didn't know that before. Nowadays they have all these counselling systems, and if that had been there for me it wouldn't have happened."

Her son was adopted by a comfortably off Tory family. Toby went to boarding school and then on to read law at the University of East Anglia. He is a charming man who describes his childhood as "broadly happy". His adoptive mother died ten years ago and his father, he says, has been "very relaxed, supportive and understanding" about his search for his natural parents.

As Toby says: "They are good people and have done me proud." "Obviously they have," adds Clare. "He's so nice."

Toby has two sisters, also adopted. "One of them is at Birmingham University and a great admirer of Clare's. She couldn't believe it when I told her my little bit of news. She thought I was joking."

Clare proudly distributes baby pictures of Toby as he tells me. "Officially I've been looking for my natural parents for about a year. But in my mind I always intended to do this. I suppose what triggered it was when I had a child. I wanted to know what was in the genes."

Toby is married with two young children. I suggest this must have come as a shock to his wife Annie. "Yes," Clare

agrees, "it's been stunning for her." Toby explains that his wife always saw the possibility for pain and was prepared for that. "Also, we're a little unit of four people and now there's all these others". Clare's family is enormous. "I've got 60, or 70, first cousins," she laughs.

Toby describes his schooldays as enjoyable. "Boarding school is a bit Victorian but it's a good place to meet friends. It's OK once you are there but it's a shock at first." As a student he was a "Tory". "Well, my family was," standing in a local election. Clare reads out his electioneering blurb from the blue sticker: "It says here you want to go into national politics." "At the time I did." Nowadays though, Toby would not describe himself in these terms. Before he met Clare or knew who she was he had written to her describing himself as a one nation Tory who was now looking at Blair.

Joking that he has had his horizons broadened considerably lately, Toby adds: "I've been dissatisfied for a long time. The idea of another Major government fills me with absolute dread and now I'm much more interested in politics. I've started buying newspapers and reading them. I'm like lots of other people - there is just a feeling that we can't go on like this."

Never having been that interested before, Toby vaguely remembers seeing Clare on *Question Time*. "But I would never have looked at the telly and said, 'Gosh, that's my Mum'. You just go around thinking she's out there some-

where and hoping that she's still alive."

Indeed, even after their first meeting, Toby still didn't realise who Clare was, though she had tried to prepare him for it. She had registered as soon as it became possible, to say that she was available if ever her son wanted to find her. It was the son who made the first contact. After this, she wrote back, imagining it would be the first of many letters before they met. "I wanted him to know me before he knew who I was. I wanted to protect him from the shock of it being me." She wrote what Toby says is a "lovely letter". "I tried to fill him in on family history. I said we had lots of teachers, that we were into social reform, that we were a little left. I talked about his father's family and how I regretted what I had done. Then I explained that there was this one little problem - 'I've got this slightly high-profile job and we don't want the Press crawling round. He thought I was being melodramatic.'"

Toby couldn't wait to meet, and arranged to visit Clare at home. He left a message on her answering machine, not catching the surname. "When she answered the door we just sort of stared at each other for five minutes," says Toby. "You brought your bike in," laughs Clare. "She looked familiar but I said, 'So what's this high-profile job you've got then?' She said, 'I'm an MP'."

Was it a tearful occasion? "Not really," says Toby, "but it was a really powerful emotion. We were talking and talking. We were very emotional. I did cry,

but not with Clare. I haven't cried like that for years." Toby has also been reunited with his natural father, who has remarried. It has also been joyful. He has all of Clare's huge family to meet and she was going off to see her grandchildren for the first time. "She's just going to see them sleeping in their beds. We've got to do it at the right pace for Annie, my wife."

Clare told Toby Blair as soon as she found out: "He has been great. His father was adopted. We talked about that and said he was happy for us. The fact that he didn't meet his real grandfather because of the way it was then was a source of sadness for him. Then he said: 'Clare, you are a one.'"

Was she frightened, of coming out in the open about this? "Really, it's very private. In normal life people would just get on with it. But given the job I do we can't. We don't want people to think we're hiding. I would prefer not to talk to the media apart from saying 'Here we are and it's wonderful'. I just hope everyone is as happy for us as we are. I haven't kept quiet about it. It happened a long time ago and you don't go round talking about the most painful thing in your life," Toby adds: "I don't think you've lied." "No," says Clare. "People asked me if I had children and I didn't have any children."

I wondered how such a traumatic experience had influenced Clare's politics. "I think there is a sense in which it shaped me in that a lot of what I do in my politics and my advice bureau is to try and stop people from getting hurt, or I

try to undo the hurt and that is probably stronger in me because of this."

They are also confident that they will be able to talk about any feelings of anger that sometimes arise after the *honeymoon* period of being reunited. "We can do anything. Talk about anything," says Clare.

Toby feels a complete person for the first time in his life. "I know who I am, where I came from, what my roots are and that bit of my personality that was a vacuum is now filled."

Clare says simply: "It wasn't a secret. It was a loss and a pain in me. I wasn't hiding anything. The big thing at the centre of my life was painful. Of course, now I feel fabulous. It's not painful any more. Here he is."

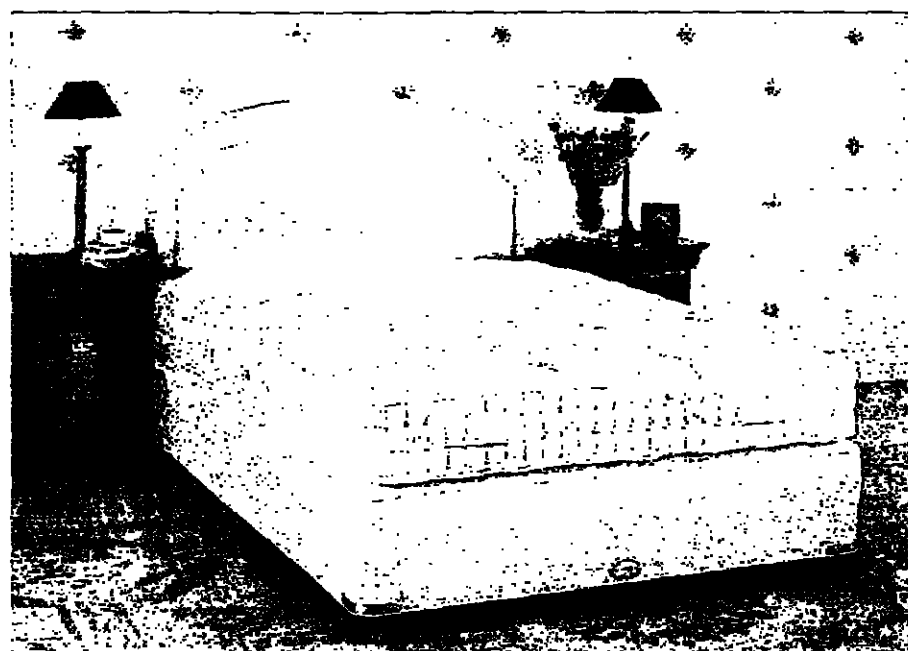
We start talking about the Mike Leigh film *Secrets and Lies* which Toby says he really wants to see, and they start teasing each other about their accents.

"When I first met him I thought his accent was a bit posh, but I don't notice it now. When he came to lunch with my staff I asked, 'What do you think?' I know his accent's a bit posh, but he can't help that."

She burst out giggling. "I'll have to have elocution lessons," she tone it down," laughs Toby. "We talk of how widespread adoption is and yet how it's still not spoken about very much. I ask Clare if she is afraid of being attacked. "I don't care. I want everyone to know. I want to show him off. It's just a happy story." Her son agrees. "It's a wonderful story," he says as he squeezes his mother's hand. And so it is.

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Writers and BBC folk: clean and reuse 'em



Miles Kington

Trends in words are like trends in cooking. They come and go without anyone really understanding the principles behind them. Hands up those who really know what Balthus cooking is. Nobody? As I thought, Me neither. Hands up those who really know what "gnomic" or "palimpsest" means. Nobody? Thank you. There is the group of trendy imported words from French and German culture, of which "Zeitgeist" is now a fading member but in whose number "genre" and

"noir" and "auteur" and "tranche" are still going quite strong.

There is the ghastly gang of words that derive from business babble, words such as "target" and "focus" and "profile". I talked on a train the other day to a young BBC man returning from a course in Milton Keynes. He said he was a strategic analyst with the BBC. I asked him what that meant. Well, he said, it meant that he helped to identify customer requirements in certain demographic areas which could be built up into programming paradigms which would lead to new strategic strands...

You mean, I said, you find out what people want and give it to them good and hard?

No, he said, shrinking back from these horrible plain words like Mary Whitehouse from a string of obscenities, it means that I help to identify certain customer requirements...

He did not know how to rephrase what he had just said. I was not surprised to learn that the reason he had been to Milton Keynes

was for a course to teach him how to understand BBC management talk. The BBC was trying to scrape away his command of English and replace it with Birtian business babble. To them, he was just a palimpsest.

I would be surprised to learn that he knew what a palimpsest was. But then Gore Vidal was not sure either. He chose the word as the title for his recent book of early memoirs, yet was so unsure why he was choosing it that he confesses as follows in his preface: "Palimpsest... For years I've used this obscure word incorrectly. Worse, I've always mispronounced it, not sounding the second 's'. I had thought that the word was applicable only to architecture, like the wall of San Marco at Venice with its fragments of bas-reliefs, bits of porphyry, shards of ceramic, all set in plaster to form a palimpsest."

I have just now looked up the earliest meaning of "palimpsest". It is even more apt than I thought: "Paper, parchment, etc. prepared for writing on and wiping out again, like a slate, and a parchment, etc. which has been written upon twice, the original writing having been rubbed out." This is pretty much what my kind of writer does anyway. Starts with life; makes a text; then a RE-vision - literally, a second seeing, an after-thought, erasing some but not all of the original while writing something new over the first layer of text.

A typical piece of Gore Vidal, that. The charm with which he admits that he, the famously fussy Gore Vidal, has been using a word wrong. The obstinacy with which he accurately describes the wrong definition. The fastidiousness with which he brings in a reference to San Marco (NOT Saint Mark's), and words like "porphyry" and "shard". And the wilful misunderstanding of the right definition to fit in with his wants - in a palimpsest everything is wiped away before reuse, as he says, but a moment later he is saying that some of the original is left, which is clearly quite untrue but would not give point to his title otherwise.

A palimpsest, then, is a *tabula rasa*, a tablet wiped clean for reuse. Well, I have spent half a century on this earth without needing that image, except in this piece, so I am amazed at the number of people on radio who do seem to need to use it. Actually, it's not a very large number. It may be only one or two. But that's still more than I'd expect, even if Vidal is the only one who has gone so far as to use it as a title for a memoir. I wonder if any of the other trendy, overused words knocking around in the top 100 would make a good title for a memoir...

Epistemology, by Melvyn Bragg; *Dystopia*, by Martin Amis; *Hubris*, by Jeffrey Archer; *Alice Vera*, by Anita Roddick; *Antibiotics*, by Ian Paisley; *Focus*, by Lord Lichfield; *Narcosis*, by Jilly Cooper; *Deconstruction*, by Gerry Adams...

Any other suggestions from readers? All good ones will be ruthlessly used and attributed.

Does anyone know what Jimmy wants?

It isn't hard to see why the less robust Tories are just a little jittery about Sir James Goldsmith at the moment. This Saturday, an extraordinary and distinctly media-friendly event takes place in Brighton: the national conference of a brand new bespoke party led by a billionaire with £20m to spend on the general election and a compellingly single-minded approach to politics.

It's easy, of course, to dismiss the band of socialists, individualist businessmen and eccentrics – glamorous and less glamorous – who will gather tomorrow night in Brighton for the Referendum Party conference. The British electorate doesn't like single-issue politics. His party is scarcely a blip in the opinion polls. Peter De Savary, Geoffrey Boycott, and John Aspinall aren't really credible as the vanguard of a new political movement. But let's leave the celeb spotting to *The Tatler* for just a moment. The really interesting question about this weekend's jamboree is whether it provides an answer to the most intriguing question: what does Jimmy want?

Frightened politicians for a start. It would take a column far longer than this to list the many extreme differences between Sir James Goldsmith and Lloyd George. But they have one feature in common. The 1918 general election is commonly called "the coupon election", because the Liberal and Conservative coalition candidates had to be certified as satisfactory supporters of the wartime Prime Minister before being sure they would be unopposed. The diarch Asquithian Liberals either refused or were refused a coupon and only a minority were elected. The Liberals were smashed as a consequence, but that's another matter.

Sir James is now operating his own version of a coupon election, and with even more zeal than the coalition leaders did in 1918. In an interview with BBC TV's *On the Record* last Sunday, Sir James chillingly explained how every MP's record was examined for whether he had voted for a referendum: "Whenever they have done so they get a certain number of points; whenever they've failed to vote, voted against or abstained they get no points."

It is obvious therefore that the 78 MPs who voted for Bill Cash's Referendum Bill earlier in the year, some of them directly because of fear of Sir James, have a good chance of high points. But what of Sir Michael Spicer, a leading Maastricht rebel who voted in favour of a referendum on the treaty? Sir James was uncompromising: "Michael Spicer's history is one of moving with the wind... I do not believe in what he says and his voting record is not impeccable." Never mind that Sir James's own views have evolved a bit since he proposed in the French edition of *The Times*, "central powers" for Brussels over "diplomacy and defence", the rigour with which Sir James is awarding his metaphorical coupons has something of the flavour of a mid-century Trotskyite sect.



Donald Macintyre

Political explanation runs into the sand. Perhaps the answer lies deep in Sir James Goldsmith's psyche

But being scary can't be the whole answer. In theory Sir James just wants a Euro-referendum. But a referendum on what exactly? The exact details, it seems, would be worked out by a Speaker's Conference. But to make Sir James pack up his tent, it would have to pose four options: 1) staying in the EU as it is; 2) returning to a pre-Maastricht EU; 3) being in an EU which was just an ERM-style free-trade area; or 4) getting out of the EU altogether. Two and Three look startlingly similar to Four, since it's surely impossible to imagine the rest of the EU opting for either just because the British electorate was in favour of them. And yet, as I understand it, Sir James would not be satisfied with a simple referendum on whether Britain should be in or out of the EU.

The campaign line, of course, is that Sir James's own political agenda has nothing to do with the Referendum Party. Yes, he's anti-EU (now) but withdrawal is not a party objective. Nor is the one goal which can be ascribed to Sir James that distinguishes him from every leading British politician, including, notably Lady Thatcher: Sir James opposes global free trade. He's long been a champion of European protectionism against the US and the Far East. Now it is possible that Sir James might attract some militant young Tories anxious to revisit the anti-American protectionist tendencies of previous generations on the right. But it's almost impossible to understand how his long-held enthusiasm for European tariff barriers squares with his desire to dismantle the EU as we know it. Indeed the "what does he want" question is now so confusing that it's almost easier to fall back on the psychological explanation offered by his biographer Geoffrey Wansell. According to Wansell, Goldsmith's greatest regret was that his "unconventional personal life" had prevented him entering politics. A regret all the keener because his MP father, Frank, lost his seat in the wave of anti-German feeling at the end of the First World War.

This week his party is claiming a fresh momentum. Ten thousand are said to have registered as "active supporters" after the media blitz of the past few days. Yesterday Sir James challenged Jacques Santer to a TV debate after the European Commission complained about the content of his newspaper advertisements. A spokesman for Sir James denied persistent reports from Vienna that he is planning to form a grouping in the European Parliament with Jörg Haider. But even supposing such momentum could be sustained, I doubt if the Referendum Party will have remotely as much impact in the ballot box as it will have on TV screens.

Last week Sir James publicly "vomited" over the present generation of professional politicians, their evasions and their prevarications. But for all their low opinions of the messy accommodations of party politics the electors are more grimly realistic about the alternatives than he is.

Nothing for something – the Nineties way

by Ann Treneman

Mark Howarth was 23 and wanted to make something of his life. He had been on the dole, worked in a pie factory and behind a bar. A week of work experience at Radio Stoke came to nothing, but he was luckier at Raymond's press agency in Derby. "Not a word was said, but it graduated from work experience to voluntary work," he says.

That lasted for three months. His mum and dad had to help him out, and finally, just when he was getting desperate for money, Raymond's offered him a job – the kind that comes with a monthly pay cheque. "It was a fantastic feeling. It really was all worth it," he says. That was more than a year ago.

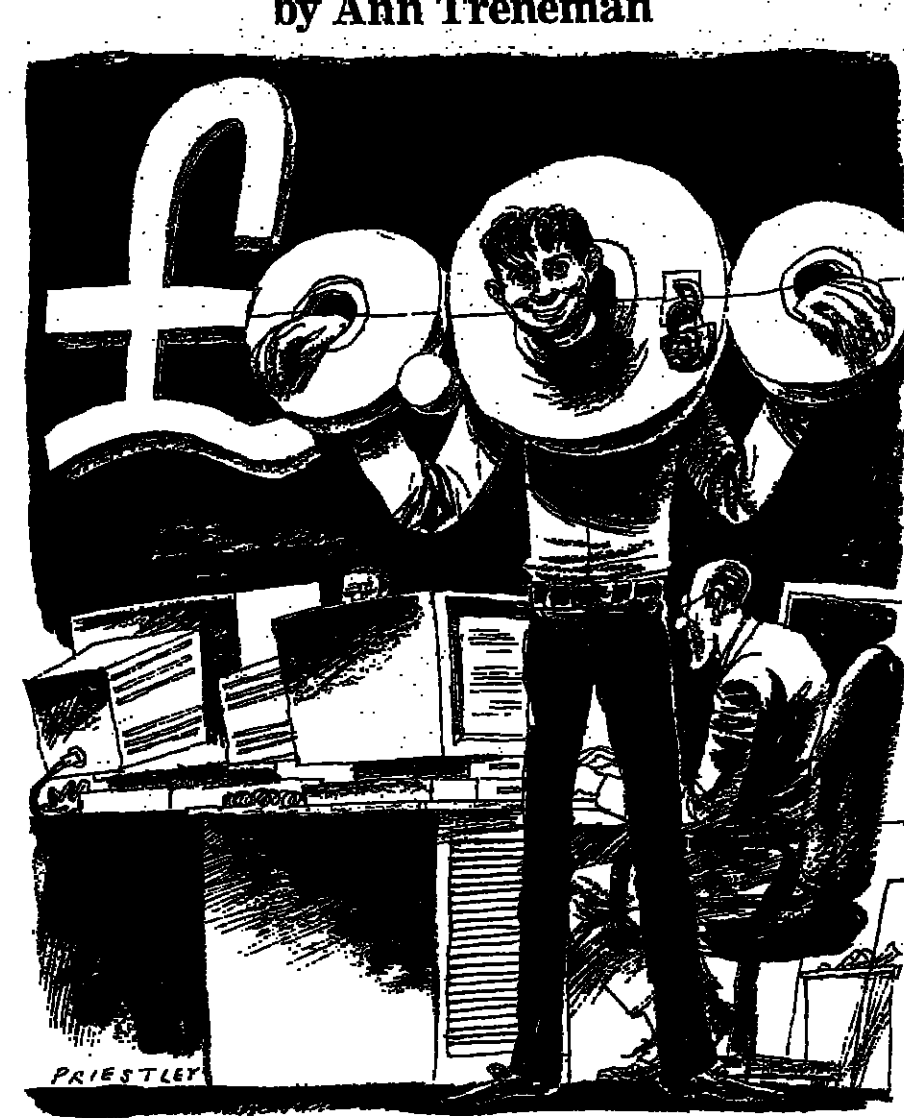
Some people might consider this a modern-day version of slave labour. Mark and his employer disagree. "I've worked jobs for £75 a week that I considered slave labour. This was not slave labour. It was something I had to do to make my mark and get on the ladder," he says.

In Nineties Britain, it is strange but true that one of the best ways to get a job is to work for nothing. "I just think it is amazing how many people are working for nothing," says one twentysomething who did not want his name used for fear of losing his non-job. "Sometimes I get outraged by it, and then suddenly I remember that I am working for nothing, too."

It's the kind of memory trick experienced by hundreds, if not thousands, of Britons. It used to be that nobody discussed salaries out of discretion; now it may be that they simply don't have one to be discreet about. These "job" arrangements are often casual, secretive, ad hoc. After all, this is essentially a feudal relationship, and serfs are not best known for speaking out.

The Government knows nothing about it. It cannot marshal one fact about unpaid workers or work experience. There is no category for them in the labour force survey, so reports from Vienna that he is planning to form a grouping in the European Parliament with Jörg Haider. But even supposing such momentum could be sustained, I doubt if the Referendum Party will have remotely as much impact in the ballot box as it will have on TV screens.

Last week Sir James publicly "vomited" over the present generation of professional politicians, their evasions and their prevarications. But for all their low opinions of the messy accommodations of party politics the electors are more grimly realistic about the alternatives than he is.



In Britain today it is strange but true that one of the best ways to get a job is to work for no pay. But where does exploitation begin?

tics on it. One is very much stuck with anecdotes."

Sue Dirmikis's anecdotes are superior to most. She heads the University of London's King's College careers office, and does not hesitate when asked if unpaid work experience can last for months. "Definitely, that's normal. That's my experience. I do caution people, however, to be sure that the work they are doing is being appreciated."

Britain has a black market and a grey market, but this is an invisible market. No one knows when volunteering ends and work begins. When does

exploitation start? Some employers hint at payment but never cough up. To what lengths will the young and hopeful go? As Bert Clough of the TUC notes, "Everybody wants to be Jeremy Paxman these days." But Paxman's Rule must be that there can only be one.

Ian Christie, of the Henley Centre for Forecasting, sees unpaid work as a trend especially prevalent in the arts, the environment and the media. In all of these areas, demand for jobs far outstrips supply. "The more the labour market tightens, the more you see a bidding

war on qualifications," he says. "People wanting to get into these areas are going to find that having the right qualifications is not enough. There will be a bidding up on experience, too. Some will find that they have to do a long, unpaid apprenticeship."

But who is getting hurt here? Mark Howarth and his employer have emerged as winners. And if a "volunteer worker" feels exploited, it should not be that hard to leave. Perhaps the only losers are those who miss their career break because they cannot afford to work for free. They're

back at the pie factory, dreams dashed.

There is a more pernicious trend, though. We are living through a great blurring of the lines between work and pay. As apprenticeships have died, training schemes have blossomed. Now they are booming, and in their wake trails the likes of Workfare. It has not escaped people's notice that one of the employers in Kent to take on the pilot project is a Napoleonic fort whose foundations were built on slave labour.

Work experience is not slave labour, but it is still work for no pay, and inevitably this is the kind of trend that confuses some employers into thinking that it is normal for some jobs to be done for free. The Freebie Factor is no trifling matter: it is easy to believe that it is your right to have that holiday, that bottle of whisky, that keen young thing to do the photocopying. "I think it certainly is the case increasingly that if employers can get people to work for very little or nothing, they will employ them," says Bharti Patel, deputy director of the Low Pay Unit.

This could be a factor behind the fall in hourly wages. "The lowest-paid male manual workers now earn less, relative to the average, than in 1986 when figures were first collected," says Ms Patel. Downshifting can be self-defeating. In Oregon, in the western United States, it is illegal to pump your own petrol. The reason for this law is to protect the kind of minimum-wage service jobs that every economy needs. It is far better to be pumping petrol than unemployed.

That sort of thinking does not fit in Britain's enterprise economy, where people work longer hours than anywhere else in Europe. A new book, *The Blair Revolution*, by Michael Barratt Brown and Ken Coates, notes that some two million more people could have been employed if everyone worked a 40-hour week and not 44 or 48 hours. As the Low Pay Unit director Chris Pond has said: "We're about to enter the next century, but many people are stranded in the last."

A hundred years ago, it was normal for parents to pay employers for an apprenticeship for their child. As more young hopefuls find *ad hoc* apprenticeships, parents are once again digging deep into their pockets. After all, if their sons and daughters want a job, they should be prepared to work for it. That is the Victorian way.

When the invitation arrived to dine at Sudeley Castle, I thought, Well, of course, I am very much a castle kinda guy these days. I've reached that stage of maturity, that pitch of distinction, that plane of sophistication which should, by rights, ensure invitations to stately homes and battlemented fortresses come flocking like Hitchcock sparrows through my letter box every weekend. If I possessed a valet, I would have instructed him to lay out my smoking jacket and monogrammed shirt (if I possessed either) and pack the old soup-and-fish into the Louis Vuitton matching bags (if I possessed one) before motoring to Gloucestershire in the Morgan with the leather belt over the bonnet (guess). Being, however, grindingly poor and humble, I filled an overnight bag with toothbrushes, non-matching socks and the Booker shortlist, hauled on my fake-Armani two-piece, and headed for Puddington.

En route to Cheltenham (our hostess was sponsoring one of the events at the Literary Festival), I fell into a pleasing reverie: the courtyard ablaze with lights from mulioned windows, the noise of a

brace of Irish wolfhounds dismembering some unfortunate villain in the outhouses, flaming torches on the castle's ancient frontage, ancient oaks past which one's limo grandly sweeps, a gruff word of welcome from Borage, the gaunt but loyal butler, and one's lovely hostess framed in the doorway: "John, how lovely. I've put you in the Japanese Room..."

Bafflingly, no limo greeted one at the station so, encumbered by briefcase and overnight bag, I hailed a cab. As we speeded the 10 miles that lay between me and an evening of tinkling laughter and chaps offering you snuff, I realised I was starving. And it was 5.30pm and I was gasping for a drink. Ah well (I promised my reflection), 15 minutes from now, you'll be drowning in Kir Royales and haled in Passing Clouds.

We stopped at an uncompromising gate, chained and padlocked and bearing a message that people with deliveries should consider delivering them somewhere else (Stroud, say). The driver opined that I would have to walk. Certainly not, I said, kindly drop me off in front of the castle, beside the mulioned windows etc. No chance matty, he retorted,

john walsh

It came to me: I was in a comic novel. Not Tom Sharpe, more Wodehouse

it's here or nothing. So, briefcase and overnight bag in hands, I set off on the mile or so to the castle, whose lights you could see as a spectral gleam through the trees. It was hellish dark, illuminated by fitful moonlight that turned the trees into silhouettes of huge animals throttling smaller ones. I thought of Dana Andrews being pursued by a fiend on a forest in *Night of the Demon*. My footsteps rang with diminishing confidence as I got near another gate, a much larger one like at the entrance to Citizen Kane's Xanadu. It was festooned with barbed wire. It didn't actually say "trespassers will be shot", but the message was clear. I took an adjacent pathway that, instead of leading towards the castle, kept steering you away from it. And every time you thought to climb the fence, it became all businesslike, with saw-tooth wire and spikes. The pathway disappeared into a muddy track. The moon disappeared, as did my chances of a Kir Royale. I climbed one fence, then a stile in a patch of nettles. I tried whistling "I Got No Strings To Tie Me Down" to keep my spirits up, but no sound came (thirst, you see). My spotless



space of one hour, we had the Duchess of Kent buying gardening books... and General Pinochet buying books on Military History and Diplomacy. And taking tea and fondant fancies together in Fortnams afterwards, I'll be bound. (Now that would be a story...)



The Duchess of Hatching

Remember the little American boy who was accused of sexual harassment for kissing a little girl in his class? Well in Connecticut, they're now trying to arraign a dog for unmannerly conduct. What's more (oh joy, oh bliss), the owner of the accused is a judge.

According to my copy of *Dogs Today* (I get it for the marrowbone recipes), a Superior Court Judge named Howard Moraghan habitually brings his golden retriever Kodak to the court. While hanging around the clerk's office, Kodak, who is possessed of a lively and rather, um, direct personality, habitually goes up to women wearing skirts and nuzzles them. But rather than greet the dog's overtures with the traditional strangled laugh and a bit of squirming, one of Kodak's victims is suing him, via his owner, for "aggressive

nuzzling". On at least three occasions, a Ms Barbara Monsky complains, "the dog has stuck its nose under the plaintiff's skirt and pointed its snout upwards towards her crotch". The poor plaintiff is claiming "emotional distress" and that she is being discriminated against because of her gender – Kodak, it seems, has no interest in male crotchets (and who can blame him?). She says the judge only smirks at her distress – and he says the threatened action is "preposterous". I tend to agree. You simply cannot go around accusing dumb and friendly animals of being hostile cunninglyaphillic just because their noses are at the same level as somebody's gusset.

Seeking to help the defence's case, the editor of *Dogs Today*, Beverley Cuddy, called in the advice of Dr Roger Mugford, an animal behaviour specialist, who said: "Dogs greet each other that way. It's a rich source of information. Their superior noses can tell age, sex, health – even what has most recently been eaten..." Excuse me a moment. Feel a bit queasy.



Retriever on the rack



Sudeley Castle: lovely by day, demonic by night

JULIAN BARNES
TOM STOPPARD
NICK HORNBY
JUNG CHANG
&
JULIET STEVENSON

all reading and signing on behalf of the Medical Foundation for the Care of Victims of Torture on Friday 18th October at 6.30pm at the RSA, 8 John Adam Street To reserve your ticket call Waterstone's on 0181 996 4327 or 0181 543 3005 All tickets are £15 and include wine

JP 1001520

Investment: Butler-Wheelhouse cruises at Smiths 24
Market report: Allied at last chance saloon 25
Economic view: Crisis looms on state pensions 26

Senior Wickes management was aware of bogus profits 6 months before disclosure

Nigel Cope

Wickes' senior management were aware of accounting irregularities at the group's DIY business at least six months before they made the problems public, it emerged yesterday. The admission is contained in a letter sent to Wickes shareholders yesterday by the new chairman, Michael von Brentano. The letter attempts to detail how the accounting difficulties arose and who was responsible. It states: "Instances came to light in 1995 in Wickes' businesses in the UK and on the Continent of rebates and contributions being booked as profit in the group's accounts earlier than was justified. The board believes that senior management and the auditors [Arthur Andersen] should have reacted more effectively to these warning signals."

Wickes did not make a public disclosure about the problems until June this year, when it admitted that its profits might have been over-stated due to the incorrect accounting of supplier rebates and contributions. Henry Sweetbaum resigned as chairman the following day.

The company has not revealed what these "instances" were. However, it admits that they included the poorly performing Hunter Timber business, which was sold in September 1995. The company says it became aware of "inconsistencies" in the accounting methods during that year. The company declined to elaborate further, and denied sug-

gestions that Hunter's suppliers demanded the return of their rebates and contributions when the business was sold in 1995.

Management's failure to disclose the problems earlier is just one of a series of criticisms included in the damning report, which was delayed for more than two weeks due to legal difficulties. The report confirms a systematic attempt to conceal the accounting scam that centred on the buying department. It concluded that there was "serious misrepresentation" and "uncommercial arrangements."

It said profits were over-stated by £51m between 1992-96 at Wickes Building Supplies, the group's main DIY retailing subsidiary. Some of the activities, such as the misleading of the auditors, are contrary to criminal law. However, the Serious Fraud Office says it is not yet investigating the Wickes affair. The DTI also says that it has not moved to ban any of the Wickes management from acting as a director. Wickes is reserving the right to take action against its auditors, Arthur Andersen.

The six page document says immediate responsibility for the problems lay with former chairman, Henry Sweetbaum, who had "ultimate responsibility for the group's policies on rebates and contributions." It continues: "He must therefore accept responsibility for what occurred in the buying department, which he has done, and for the failure of the group's senior management to implement controls to prevent it from occurring."



Mr Sweetbaum, who denies any knowledge of the irregularities, is to pay back £720,000 net of tax. This represents two thirds of the payments he received under the group's long-term incentive plan. He is waiving any right to future payments under the scheme, which could have amounted to £885,000. He is also waiving any claim for compensation for loss of office. The company has agreed to take no



action against him. He retains his pension which has a capital value of £2.9m. Trevor Llewellyn, the former finance director, now at Caradon, who also denied knowledge of the problems, will repay £485,000 of his long-term bonus payments. The company has agreed to make no claim against him. Mr Llewellyn was succeeded as finance director by Stuart Stradling in August 1995.



Michael Corner has stepped down as group administration director and resigned from the board. He is not repaying any of the £600,000 he received in annual bonus and long-term incentive plan payments last year. He will be retained as a consultant and no claim will be made against him.

Les Rosenthal and UK commercial director Chris Miles, who resigned from the group earlier this year, will not receive any payment for loss of office. The company is reserving the right to take further action against them. Disciplinary proceedings involving further middle ranking executives and more junior employees will be implemented in due course.

The report states that profits at Wickes Building Supplies were over-stated by £16m in 1995, £14m in 1994 and £11m in the years before that. This related to the incorrect booking of supplier rebates which were often linked to "unrealistic volume targets". The report says some supplier arrangements were uncommercial and were "solely designed to generate rebates and contributions in one year at the expense of later years."

Group shareholder funds will be reduced by £2m due to similar rebate issues in continental Europe. A further £10m provision will be made to cover the group's exposure to property leases relating to Builders Mate and Hunter Timber. Almost 100 sites still remain unsold. The report further reveals that Wickes operated at a loss in the first nine months of this year, primarily as a result of correctly accounting for supply contributions.

Comment, page 23

Sacked BET head wins £3m in compensation

Peter Rodgers
Financial Editor

John Clark, the chief executive sacked from BET after a takeover by Rentokil Initial, yesterday won £3m in compensation, in a decision that could dramatically increase the size of future executive payoffs. Although Mr Clark received only half the £6m he asked for, because he failed to win an additional £3m claim for lost share options, the court awarded him the full benefit of his three-year rolling contract. Normally executives receive much less than the full amount of their contracts, because the payoffs are negotiated downward when they depart.

The award stunned Rentokil Initial, which called it an "enormous sum" and announced it would appeal. It is four times the £750,000 Rentokil Initial paid into court before the case, and three times the £1m that Mr

Clark said he offered to settle for, shortly after he was dismissed in April.

However, a Rentokil Initial spokesman said the company was astonished by the claim that Mr Clark had offered to settle for £1m. "Our final offer was £950,000 and we never received an offer to settle for £1m."

Mr Clark, 55, said he had offered to have the matter referred to independent arbitration so that it could be dealt with quickly and privately to save £600,000 legal costs, which Rentokil's shareholders will now have to pay.

He added that he was now eager to continue his search for a "new challenge" as chief executive in a big organisation.

During the hearing, there were claims from Rentokil Initial's side that Mr Clark had spent the summer playing golf and had not seriously looked for a job, and counter claims that it was unlikely that somebody

his age could find another post as chief executive.

Mr Justice Timothy Walker rejected suggestions by BET that Mr Clark had not taken proper steps to mitigate his financial loss by seeking alternative employment.

The judge accepted evidence from a consultant who said he could recall only two instances when clients had accepted applicants over the age of 55.

The award was for loss of £490,000 salary, including increases during the three-year notice period to which he was entitled under his rolling contract, plus damages for loss of pension rights, bonus payments of 50 per cent of salary, an executive car and chauffeur, health insurance and the value of holiday entitlement.

Mr Clark was head-hunted by BET in 1991. He much improved the group's fortunes and there was no suggestion he was sacked for failure.

Morgan reassures clients as heads roll

Jim Treanor
Banking Correspondent

Deutsche Morgan Grenfell yesterday launched a telephone onslaught on its key clients to reassure them about its fund management subsidiary's prospects, as it confirmed that four top directors and a compliance officer had been fired.

The most senior departure was Keith Percy, chief executive of Morgan Grenfell Asset Management, who has been replaced by Robert Smith, who headed Morgan Grenfell's investigation into the £180m fund management scandal. However, Morgan's attempt to reassure its clients was met with reservations by the Merchant Navy Officers' Pension Fund, which is to review its contract with the company. Geoff Henry, chief executive of the fund, which has over £200m at Morgan, said: "This is something for the trustees to consider. Keith has built up a strong team."

He added: "It's obviously a concern that the person who was the architect of Morgan Grenfell's revival has left." His investment committee meets in December and will not discuss Morgan Grenfell before then.

Mr Smith, a 52-year-old Glaswegian, said: "Obviously with change like this some people may reconsider. We've spoken to big institutional funds and we seem to be getting supportive comments back."

Graham Kane, managing director of Morgan Grenfell Unit Trust Managers, Michael Wheatley, compliance director at Morgan Grenfell Asset Management and Glyn Owen, chief investment officer for the international division of Morgan Grenfell Asset Management, were also shown the door yesterday.

Comment, page 23

Guardian revives plans for listing

Mathew Horsman
Media Editor

Guardian Media Group, owners of the *Guardian* and *Observer* newspapers, is believed to have revived plans to seek a stock market listing for some of its key assets, in part to raise equity funds to offset growing losses at its ailing Sunday title. The plan would see the company's *Auto Trader* title, its independent television production companies and other non-core assets pooled into a

single company, possibly Broadcasting Communications, one of its subsidiaries.

The Guardian Media Group, controlled by the Scott Trust, would sell shares in the enlarged subsidiary, although it is believed GMG would continue to hold a majority stake. The equity funds raised would be used in part to help finance the development of the two national titles.

The plan is similar to one contemplated in 1989, which was rejected by the Scott Trust. It is believed that the current plan

could have the backing of several GMG directors. Directors contacted yesterday did not return phone calls. Harry Roche, the executive chairman of the group, could not be reached.

It is believed the plan may have been developed with the help of Hambros Bank. The bank had no comment.

The *Observer* has been a significant drain on the group, and several efforts have been made to turn it around. Most recently, the title was relaunched with a new editor, Will Hutton.

Kirkham family to sell stake in DFS

Nigel Cope

Sir Graham Kirkham, the Yorkshire entrepreneur who runs DFS Furniture, yesterday announced that his two children are to sell the bulk of their 22 per cent stake in the company, raising up to £120m.

The sale comes a year after Sir Graham sold 74 million shares worth £60m. Three years ago the ebullient Yorkshireman and his immediate family raised £130m when DFS was floated on the stock market.

Sir Graham said his two children, Michael and Julie, were selling the shares to spread their portfolio of investments.

"My children's shareholding in DFS represents the vast majority of their personal assets. Given they have no involvement at all in the running of the company and are married with children of their own, they consider a broader investment portfolio more appropriate to their individual needs and circumstances."

Sir Graham said his children would retain "a meaningful stake" in the company. He added that he had no plans to sell his remaining 8 per cent holding.

Sir Graham gave the shares to his two children in the early 1980s. Michael Kirkham, 32, works for an overseas charity. Julie Cross, 30, recently gave birth to a second child.

Sir Graham said he was not disappointed with the decision. "I would say there is no better place for their money than in DFS. But they are both adults. If they feel it is right for them I would want to support them. I'm not disappointed at all."

He said no decision had been made on how the funds might be invested. He hinted that some might be invested in art, which would appeal to Sir Graham, who splashed out on a Gainsborough painting ahead of the company's flotation. He said the family had no investments in property "which some might see as a gap".

The planned share sale was made alongside an impressive set of figures for last year which showed DFS profits increased by 19 per cent to £31m.

Investment Column, page 24

Inflation danger as public borrowing hits £3.4bn

Diane Coyle
Economics Editor

Signs of inflationary pressures building up in the jobs market alarmed the City yesterday, as did figures showing that government borrowing was surprisingly high last month.

The headline unemployment rate in September fell to 7.4 per cent, its lowest for more than five years, while the gap between public spending and tax revenues was at £3.4bn, above £1bn more than expected.

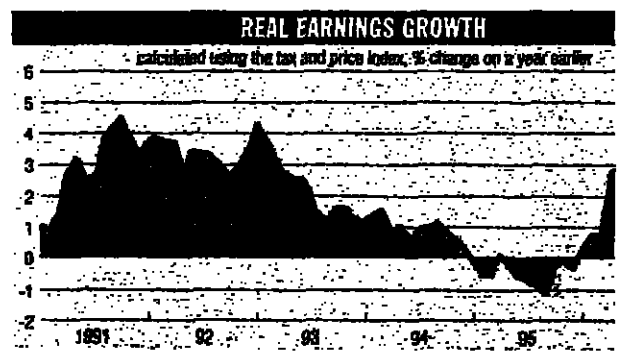
Labour called for an independent audit of the public finances ahead of next month's Budget. "The British people have a right to know the real state of the nation's books," said

Alan Milburn, the Treasury spokesman.

"These terrible figures show that the Government is continuing to run up debt at the rate of over £1,000 per second," said Malcolm Bruce, spokesman for the Liberal Democrats.

But the Chancellor is still expected to approve plans for tax cuts worth £25bn to £4bn at the Treasury's pre-Budget meeting tomorrow. Analysts think he will also leave the cost of borrowing unchanged after the next monetary meeting, due on 30 October.

The unemployment claimant count fell by 35,600 to 2,073,100 last month, the biggest monthly drop since December 1994 when the economy was growing



well above trend. The number of vacancies at Jobcentres increased by 16,600. Employment rose by 35,000 in the April-June quarter, the latest economy-wide figure

based on a survey of employers. The Labour Force Survey, a survey of employees, showed an increase of 70,000 in employment in June-August, of which 15,000 were full-time jobs.

Most worrying for the financial markets, the underlying growth of average earnings was estimated at 4 per cent in August, with July's figure revised up to the same level. Earnings have now been on an upward trend for more than a year.

"This will no doubt fuel concern that conditions in the labour market are tightening," said Alex Gannard, an economist at UBS.

Separate figures showed that the Public Sector Borrowing Requirement was an unexpected large £3.4bn last month. Excluding privatisation receipts, which amounted to just under £1bn in September, the PSBR is scarcely any lower than at the same stage last financial year.

Although the gilts market fell in reaction to the figures, analysts agreed the gap between revenues and spending would be close to target. "The public finances are still on an improving trend," said Simon Briscoe at investment bank Nikko.

Tax revenues have grown in line with the Treasury forecast so far this year, but spending is running ahead of plans. Last month this was due partly to a £1.2bn one-off payment to clear some index-linked government debt. The Treasury said yesterday the PSBR was on line to meet the £27bn target this year.

The FTSE 100 index fell nearly 29 points to 4,022 yesterday. Sterling edged down to DM2.4368.

STOCK MARKETS					
FTSE 100		Dow Jones		Nikkei	
4024.40	-26.40	6030	-0.7	21600	-100
4020	-10.70	5980	-0.8	21500	-100
3980	-11.30	5950	-0.6	21400	-100
3940	-10.60	5920	-0.5	21300	-100
3900	-10.20	5890	-0.4	21200	-100
3860	-9.80	5860	-0.3	21100	-100
3820	-9.40	5830	-0.2	21000	-100
3780	-9.00	5800	-0.1	20900	-100
3740	-8.60	5770	0.0	20800	-100
3700	-8.20	5740	0.1	20700	-100
3660	-7.80	5710	0.2	20600	-100
3620	-7.40	5680	0.3	20500	-100
3580	-7.00	5650	0.4	20400	-100
3540	-6.60	5620	0.5	20300	-100
3500	-6.20	5590	0.6	20200	-100
3460	-5.80	5560	0.7	20100	-100
3420	-5.40	5530	0.8	20000	-100
3380	-5.00	5500	0.9	19900	-100
3340	-4.60	5470	1.0	19800	-100
3300	-4.20	5440	1.1	19700	-100
3260	-3.80	5410	1.2	19600	-100
3220	-3.40	5380	1.3	19500	-100
3180	-3.00	5350	1.4	19400	-100
3140	-2.60	5320	1.5	19300	-100
3100	-2.20	5290	1.6	19200	-100
3060	-1.80	5260	1.7	19100	-100
3020	-1.40	5230	1.8	19000	-100
2980	-1.00	5200	1.9	18900	-100
2940	-0.60	5170	2.0	18800	-100
2900	-0.20	5140	2.1	18700	-100
2860	0.20	5110	2.2	18600	-100
2820	0.60	5080	2.3	18500	-100
2780	1.00	5050	2.4	18400	-100
2740	1.40	5020	2.5	18300	-100
2700	1.80	4990	2.6	18200	-100
2660	2.20	4960	2.7	18100	-100
2620	2.60	4930	2.8	18000	-100
2580	3.00	4900	2.9	17900	-100
2540	3.40	4870	3.0	17800	-100
2500	3.80	4840	3.1	17700	-100
2460	4.20	4810	3.2	17600	-100
2420	4.60	4780	3.3	17500	-100
2380	5.00	4750	3.4	17400	-100
2340	5.40	4720	3.5	17300	-100
2300	5.80	4690	3.6	17200	-100
2260	6.20	4660	3.7	17100	-100
2220	6.60	4630	3.8	17000	-100
2180	7.00	4600	3.9	16900	-100
2140	7.40	4570	4.0	16800	-100
2100	7.80	4540	4.1	16700	-100
2060	8.20	4510	4.2	16600	-100
2020	8.60	4480	4.3	16500	-100
1980	9.00	4450	4.4	16400	-100
1940	9.40	4420	4.5	16300	-100
1900	9.80	4390	4.6	16200	-100
1860	10.20	4360	4.7	16100	-100
1820	10.60	4330	4.8	16000	-100
1780	11.00	4300	4.9	15900	-100
1740	11.40	4270	5.0	15800	-100
1700	11.80	4240	5.1	15700	-100
1660	12.20	4210	5.2	15600	-100
1620	12.60	4180	5.3	15500	-100
1580	13.00	4150	5.4	15400	-100
1540	13.40	4120	5.5	15300	-100
1500	13.80	4090	5.6	15200	-100
1460	14.20	4060	5.7	15100	-100
1420	14.60	4030	5.8	15000	-100
1380	15.00	4000	5.9	14900	-100
1340	15.40	3970	6.0	14800	-100
1300	15.80	3940	6.1	14700	-100
1260	16.20	3910	6.2	14600	-100
1220	16.60	3880	6.3	14500	-100
1180	17.00	3850	6.4	14400	-100
1140	17.40	3820	6.5	14300	-100
1100	17.80	3790	6.6	14200	-100
1060	18.20	3760	6.7	14100	-100
1020	18.60	3730	6.8	14000	-100
980	19.00	3700	6.9	13900	-100
940	19.40	3670	7.0	13800	-100
900	19.80	3640	7.1	13700	-100
860	20.20	3610	7.2	13600	-100
820	20.60	3580	7.3	13500	-100
780	21.00	3550	7.4	13400	-100
740	21.40	3520	7.5	13300	-100
700	21.80	3490	7.6	13200	-100
660	22.20	3460	7.7	13100	-100
620	22.60	3430	7.8	13000	-100
580	23.00	3400	7.9	12900	-100
540	23.40	3370	8.0	12800	-100
500	23.80	3340	8.1	12700	-100
460	24.20	3310	8.2	12600	-100
420	24.60	3280	8.3	12500	-100
380	25.00	3250	8.4	12400	-100
340	25.40	3220	8.5	12300	-100
300	25.80	3190	8.6	12200	-100
260	26.20	3160	8.7	12100	-100
220	26.60	3130	8.8	12000	-100
180	27.00	3100	8.9	11900	-100
140	27.40	3070	9.0	11800	-100
100	27.80	3040	9.1	11700	-100
60	28.20	3010	9.2	11600	-100
20	28.60	2980	9.3	11500	-100
0	29.00	2950	9.4	11400	-100

INTEREST RATES				
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business

Butler-Wheelhouse is cruising comfortably at Smiths

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY NIGEL COPE

Keith Butler-Wheelhouse knows he is a lucky man. The former boss at Saab cars takes the controls as chief executive of Smiths Industries next month, safe in the knowledge that the avionics supplier looks set fair for at least another few years of good growth.

Under his predecessor, Sir Roger Hurn, Smiths has been transformed from a highly cyclical civilian and military aerospace group into three separately run divisions, including medical equipment and industrial products such as ventilation fans and flexible tubing.

The unfashionable move – the antithesis of the demerger craze sweeping the City – has served investors well, the shares having outperformed a soaring stock market by more than a quarter in the past year alone.

Smiths' track record on acquisitions is second to none. Strong cashflow has enabled it to splash out £475m over six years, expanding its medical and industrial products activities without tapping shareholders for money.

Last year was no exception as £98m was spent buying three bolt-on businesses, including Level 1, a US manufacturer of blood and fluid-warming systems.

These deals helped propel profits before one-off items to £165m, up 19 per cent, in the year to 3 August.

Though growth has been supercharged by acquisitions, organic growth remained strong, with underlying profits up 14 per cent as trading conditions improved across the board.

In aerospace, still the largest division by sales if only accounting for just over a quarter of profits, the main driver of growth is the increased profitability of the world's airlines and their need to replace old planes.

Smiths expects Boeing, its biggest customer, to almost double the number of its short-haul 737 aircraft produced from 76 this year to 160 by the end of the decade. Smiths receives up to \$450,000 for supplying each plane with electrical equipment. It is a similar picture with Boeing's new generation of wide-bodied 777 jets, where production is set to jump from 32 this year to 70 by 1999.

The outlook on the military side is more mixed, with the German government dragging its feet over the Eurofighter project. Orders for fighter planes from the US Air Force dried up completely this year for the first time since World War II but are set to resume next year.

Despite the acquisition spree, the

balance sheet is virtually debt-free and more deals are promised.

Panmure Gordon is expecting pre-tax profits of £190m for the current year and £215m in 1998. With the shares up 12p to 803.5p, that implies a p/e ratio falling from 19 to 17. A fair rating for a quality stock.

Believable hype from DFS

When it comes to enthusiasm, Sir Graham Kirkham of DFS Furniture is hard to beat. Records are not broken, they are "shattered". Opportunities are not significant, but "huge". As usual with his rapidly expanding furniture chain, the trio is backed up by results. Pre-tax profits were 18.6 per cent ahead to £31.1m in the year to July, the dividend was increased by 20 per cent to 10p. There was also a special dividend of 10p per share for the second year running.

Like-for-like sales increases are healthy and the company claims its

new stores in the London area are performing ahead of expectations.

But though DFS shares have been a wonderful investment – they have doubled in their two years on the stock market – there are certain worries. One is the plans by Sir Graham's two children

to sell much of their 22 per cent stake. Though this does not necessarily indicate any lack of confidence in the company's prospects, it will cast a shadow over the share price and soak up any institutional demand for the shares.

Then there is the cost of the

expansion into the South-east, which is exerting pressure on margins. DFS opened its first three stores in the London region earlier this year and now sees scope for up to 20. The higher costs meant operating margins fell from 16.9 per cent to 15.9 per cent last year. This year the company will carry £1.5m of additional training and development costs with seven new stores due open towards the end of this financial year.

But the prospects remain bright. With 38 stores, DFS claims 9 per cent of the UK upholstery market. Its aim is a nationwide network of around 100 stores which would give it a share of around 25 per cent. Analysts are expecting profits of around £38m this year. With the shares 22p lower yesterday at 514.5p, they trade on a premium rating of 22. Expensive but a strong hold.

Questions for Burn Stewart

For whisky distiller Burn Stewart to publish its delayed results on the same day as DIY retailer Wickes revealed details of a four-month investigation into accounting

irregularities was unfortunate, to say the least.

But Burn Stewart's directors rather made themselves a hostage to fortune by publicly disagreeing with their auditors over the treatment of an accounting standard, FRSS, and insisting that publication of results for the year to June, due on 2 October, was deferred for a fortnight.

In the event, pre-tax profits collapsed 74 per cent to £1m and the dividend was cut from 5p to 3.4p.

The accounting item in question – believed to relate to the treatment of whisky stocks handled by a consultant for the Chinese market – was responsible for an estimated £3m of the profits shortfall.

The City's reaction was swift with the shares marked down 7.5p to 74p, their lowest level since Burn Stewart joined the stock market at 140p five years ago. In that time sales have grown from £38m to £54m but profits have shrunk from a peak of over £10m in 1992 as the whisky price war took its toll. How directors can square this record with the "remarkable progress" they claim to have made in recent years is not clear.

The report and accounts may throw more light on these issues. And, until Burn Stewart provides more answers, the shares are best avoided.

SMITHS INDUSTRIES: AT A GLANCE

Market value: £2,420m, share price: 803.5p

Five Year record Year to 3 end-July

92 93 94 95 96

Turnover (£m) 0.64 0.75 0.77 0.80 1.01

Pre-tax profits (£m) 102 105 118 138 170

Earnings per share (pence) 23.3 23.8 26.7 31.8 36.9

Dividends per share (pence) 11.3 11.9 13.0 14.4 16.2

Share price pence

900

800

700

600

500

400

300

200

1991 92 93 94 95 96

Fresh doubts over alcopops effect on cider

Tom Stevenson
City Editor

Fresh evidence has emerged to support the widely held view that the problems affecting cider maker Matthew Clark this summer have been only partly due to the dramatic rise in popularity of alcopops. Recently commissioned research suggests that, contrary to Clark's claims, the cider market is growing fast but lack of investment in brands has quickly eroded the company's share of the sector.

Its arch-rival HP Bulmer has just finished a round of presentations to industry analysts in which it has attempted to reassure the City that Matthew Clark's problems are specific to the company and do not signal a bursting of the cider bubble that has seen volumes grow rapidly in the 1990s.

Matthew Clark stunned investors earlier in the summer when it warned that the exponential growth of alcoholic "soft" drinks such as Bass's Hoopers Hooch and Merrydown's Two Dogs had caused a sharp reduction in demand for its core cider brands, Diamond White and K, and for Babydam.

Shares in the company, which has expanded rapidly in recent years through the acquisitions of Gaymers and Buntin, slumped 23p to 431p on the day of its annual meeting, when it issued the warning, and have since fallen further. Bulmer has been telling brokers that total cider consumption in the UK continued to increase this year. Adjusted for the exceptional hot weather last year that boosted demands, consumption is forecast to have increased from 110 million gallons in 1995 to 116 million this year. In 1990 the market was only 75 million gallons.

Within that overall market, however, the performances of two major producers, who between them control about 90 per cent of the sector, have diverged dramatically. Through the supermarkets, an important outlet for cider, sales of Strongbow are running 30 per cent ahead of last year while Diamond White has declined by 24 per cent. Matthew Clark has blamed alcopops but analysts believe that does not tell the whole story. Alcopops are now thought to have taken share from across the spectrum of alcoholic drinks.

Almost a quarter of alcopop drinkers have said that were the new drinks not available they would drink bottled lagers, and 19 per cent would turn to draught lager. By contrast, only 10 per cent said they were drinking alcopops instead of bottled cider, while the equivalent figure for draught cider was 5 per cent.

IN BRIEF

• Pizza Express is buying up to 33 restaurants for £25m, funded by an issue of 5.7 million shares at 475p each in the US and the UK. The company said the acquisition was expected to be immediately earnings enhancing and the fund raising would allow the opening of 25 restaurants a year to be financed internally. Luke Johnson, chairman, said the acquisition created a "substantially more coherent group".

• Devro has made an £11.1m offer for the outstanding minority shareholding in Cutisin, a Czech manufacturer of edible and non-edible collagen casings. Devro holds 56.5 per cent of Cutisin which, Devro said, provided a low-cost manufacturing base to supply Eastern European and, increasingly, Western markets.

• Jurys Hotel has paid £1.75m for a one-acre freehold site at Pentonville Road, central London, with full planning permission to build a 168-bedroom Jurys Inn. "We envisage that it will cost £10m, including the site cost, to build, averaging £59,500 per room," a spokesman said. Jurys will also develop a 151-bedroom Inn for £7.5m on the banks of the River Shannon, Limerick, creating 80 jobs.

• Rank Organisation's recommended cash offer for Tom Cobleigh is unconditional in all respects. Valid acceptances of the offer have been received in respect of 33.82 million Tom Cobleigh shares, representing 84.9 per cent of the company's equity.

• Derwent Valley Holdings has exchanged contracts to purchase the freehold interests of Evelyn House and Dumbarton House, 54-68 Oxford Street and 51-57 Rathbone Place, in central London from London & Manchester Assurance for £20m.

• Daily Mail and General Trust has bought Radio Albury-Wodonga, which operates two regional radio stations in Australia, for A\$39m (£4.5m) cash. The acquisition is being made by Broadcast Media Group, in which DMGT has an 85 per cent stake.

• Clemencon has appointed Iain Hamilton finance director. Mr Hamilton, currently UK finance director and European financial controller for SCI Europe, will join the company on 6 January.

• Blockleys, the building materials group, reduced half-year pre-tax losses from £211,000 to £54,000, but said the period was the worst ever recorded in the brick industry. Despatches of bricks were 8 per cent down, and almost 6 per cent lower than the industry's previous worst period in 1992. There is no interim dividend.

• Bridport-Gundry, maker of medical, aviation and defence, sports and industrial and marine products, has conditionally agreed to make three acquisitions for a total of £11.95m. The acquisitions are Milfair Aviation, Avery Flight International and Safetywear. Most of the funding for the deals will come from a 3-for-4 rights issue at 130p a share, raising £9.1m. Bridport also announced that pre-tax profits for the year ending 31 July had risen 9 per cent to £1.45m on turnover of £30.3m, up from £28.4m.

• La Senza, the lingerie retailer, plans to open seven shops next month, including its first outlets in central London. A 15-year lease has been signed for a shop in the capital's Oxford Street.

• Ashbourne has bought three nursing homes for £5.9m cash. The homes are in Bolton, Cambridge and Upminster.

On the edge
of a conversation.
One of the
loneliest places
on earth.

The Economist

Slowly but surely, the crisis in state pensions is coming

One of the reasons politicians in the industrial countries are starting to sound very gung-ho about reducing government deficits is that the notion of a looming crisis in state pensions has finally filtered through to them.

It has taken several years of hammering away at the subject by international organisations such as the IMF, but at last, in countries such as Germany and Italy, even the most ardent of politicians knows that without changes in pension provision, politically thorny as that is, there could be a fiscal explosion before the end of their career.

The cause of the pension problem, approaching many governments with the slow inevitability of lava flow, is the combination of pay-as-you-go state pension schemes with demographic change. The number of pensioners in all developed countries is growing while in many, the working-age population paying the taxes to pay the pensions is shrinking.

The penny has dropped that pay-as-you-go schemes are unsustainable. The British government was one of the first to take action by encouraging people to opt out of a state scheme, which was made much less generous by being linked to prices rather than earnings, and set up a private pension.

If other countries follow the same route, and allow their unfunded state pension schemes to wither, there will be some big macroeconomic implications. One of the most important, and one which has been tackled by economists, is what will happen to national savings rates as a result of ageing populations and changes to pension systems.

Of course, the first law of economics is that for every economist there is an equally and opposite economist (the

second law is that they are both wrong). So it is not too surprising to find that there is no definitive answer to the question of savings. To be fair, this is because it is an empirical question. There will be two opposing forces acting on national savings during the next few decades.

The first is the demographic impact. The standard theory about how people choose between spending and saving is the "life cycle hypothesis", which argues that early in their working life people borrow, in their prime years they save, and in retirement they run down their savings.

Aggregate this across a nation, and the theory predicts that saving will rise in countries with a growing working population and fall where there is a growing number of the non-working elderly. There is some evidence of a negative relationship between savings and the proportion of the old in the population for a cross-section of countries.

However, the demographics are a bit more complex. For the next 20 years or so, most industrial countries will see more saving by the working population, for the baby boom is still in its prime years. After that, national savings rates are likely to decline. But the outlook varies widely between countries and the amount of extra saving in the meantime could be huge.

A recent paper by David Miles, a professor at Imperial College, for the City investment bank Merrill Lynch, calculates that for the big four European economies savings rates will peak between 2010 and 2020 at rates 2-3 percentage points higher than their current levels.

For the UK the peak comes at 2.3 per cent above the 1995 rate of 20 per cent in 2010. But savings will not drop below the 1995 level until 2035, he predicts.

The picture gets more complicated when you try to take



Diane Coyle

The number of pensioners in all developed countries is growing while in many the population paying taxes to provide the pensions is shrinking

account of whether the simultaneous changes to state pension systems change patterns of saving. This question is addressed in a new book by Professor Richard Disney of Queen Mary College.

Prof Disney argues that the key feature of the change in pension systems is not the trend from state to private pensions, but the trend from defined benefit schemes to defined contributions schemes.

Most private sector pensions were, until recently at least, defined benefit plans provided by companies. The economic purpose of a pension that guaranteed workers a given fraction of their final salary was to bind them to the company over a working career.

Of course, this has become more expensive as company workforces age. It does not suit younger workers either.

Private pensions are increasingly of the defined contribution type – essentially a personal savings plan with pensions determined by the return on the accumulated savings.

According to the book, the coverage of defined contribution schemes has almost doubled from 8 per cent of pension plans in 1987.

Prof Disney writes: "Where there is an insurance motive for pension provision the switch from a publicly or privately funded defined benefit plan to a group or individual defined contribution plan seems to involve the participant in much greater risks."

The risk of providing for retirement is switching not simply from the government to the private sector but from companies to individuals as well.

The transition from pay-as-you-go state pensions to private pensions might reduce the national savings rate if it involves the government or private sector in saving less or borrowing more to meet the shortfall.

In addition, if people have a choice, they might well opt to pay less into their pensions. However, if the system to which industrial countries are switching places more risk on individuals, savings could increase.

Anecdotally, it is clear that many people in Britain have already added provision for their old age as an extra burden to be saved for. Certainly in Chile, which

privatised its pensions in 1981 by introducing individual retirement savings plans, private sector savings soared from 0.2 per cent in 1981 to 12.7 per cent in 1989, more than offsetting a drop in public sector saving as the government stepped in to finance the unfunded pension obligations of the previous state scheme.

The real catch in the privatisation of pensions is distributional. If this issue is not addressed explicitly – and it is not – the costs of pension reform fall on the most vulnerable people.

In the UK there is a growing class of poor pensioners, with no private cover and a state pension which leaves them further and further behind the rest of the population.

With the honourable exception of the Labour MP Frank Field, whose new book on the subject of how to provide universal pension cover in a modern economy was published earlier this week, few politicians have addressed the distributional question.

Mr Field proposes compulsory individual saving for retirement and unemployment, restoring the insurance aspect of welfare, but has costed state provision of the means to save for people with incomes of less than £100 a week.

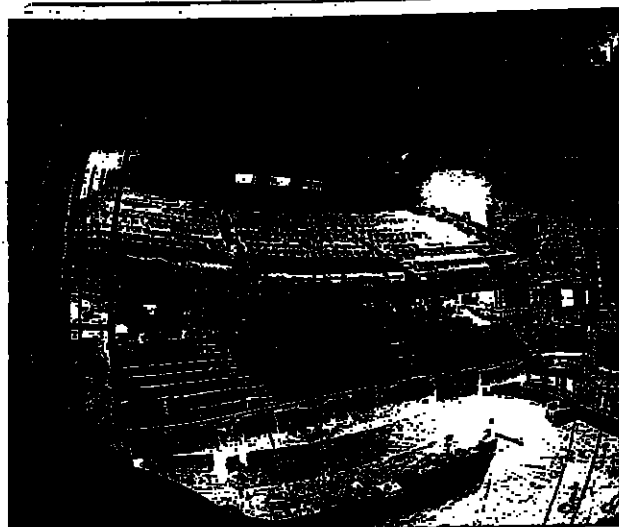
This proposal does involve extra taxes, however, even though some of the money needed would come from winding down the State Earnings Related Pension Scheme completely.

For countries which have traditionally used the tax and benefits system to redistribute income, the switch from unfunded to insurance-based pensions – or health-care or unemployment cover, for that matter – raises issues as thorny as the ones being left behind.

* "Can We Afford To Grow Older?" Richard Disney, MIT Press £24.95

The Lyceum is saved... for rock musical fans

PEOPLE & BUSINESS



From Shakespeare to Lloyd Webber: The restored Lyceum

The magnificent Lyceum Theatre near Covent Garden in London is about to reopen on 19 November after being rebuilt by Apollo Leisure at a cost of £14.5m.

Two years ago Paul Gregg, chairman of Apollo and 80 per cent shareholder, bought the leasehold of the then-dilapidated theatre from the Lyceum Trust. George Walker's Brent Walker had wanted to change the use of the theatre in the 1980s but never got permission from the Trust, and now the former stonemason ground of such great Shakespearean thespians as Henry Irving and Helen Terry is saved for the theatre.

Well, up to a point. The first production will be Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice's *Jesus Christ Superstar*. Shakespeare it ain't.

George Simpson, managing director of GEC, obviously likes having familiar faces around him. Yesterday GEC appointed two of his former colleagues to senior posts.

Jack Fryer, who has been brought in as GEC's strategic planning director, worked with Mr Simpson at Lucas, Mr Simpson's last job. Rob Meakin, who becomes personnel director, comes from British Aerospace, where Mr Simpson was before Lucas.

Mr Fryer should be on top of the figures side of strategic planning – he began his career as a nuclear physicist with Rolls-Royce.

Mr Meakin certainly has a CV which would make any personnel manager quake; he worked with Ford Motor Company in the strike-plagued 1970s, then with British Leyland and Rover.

Keith Butler-Wheelhouse joined Smiths Industries as a director in August, and will take over from Sir Roger Hume as chief executive from 19 November. Sir Roger will remain as chairman of the aerospace group.

Stepping into the Smiths cockpit yesterday, Mr Butler-

Wheelhouse said how nice it was "coming into a business which doesn't need much doing to it".

What that says about the automotive side of Smiths, where he was chief operating officer, I've no idea. The tanned native of the West Midlands emigrated to South Africa at the age of 15, and now aged 50 has the accent to match.

There's just one fly in the ointment at Smiths, he says: "I'm still trying to come to grips with these aerospace acronyms. I still find this alphabet soup confusing."

I see what he means. In Smiths's results presentation yesterday, simplified for the consumption of journalists, the company mentioned JPATS, F/A-18C/Ds, Sims Level 1 and HMCs. Before you ask, I haven't a clue.

Don't worry, Mr Butler-Wheelhouse. Aerospace has nothing on accountancy when it comes to acronyms.

ICAEW, AFB, FRC and CIMA were all banded about yesterday as Charles Swinson, a partner in BDO Stoy Hayward and the Orson Welles of the accountancy world,

addressed journalists on the joys of self regulation.

The profession which audits our companies still insists that it can sort out its own wrongdoers in-house, without pesky intervention from the DTI and the like.

Mr Swinson was proposing a new independent body which would regulate the regulators. On the same panel was Norman Lyle, senior vice president of CIMA, which represents management accountants.

CIMA recently broke off merger talks with the chartered accountant's body, and evidently still harbours hurt pride at what it sees as snobbery amongst the chartered brethren.

Every time Mr Swinson made a point, Mr Lyle broke in with a contradiction or a question. Things got so heated that there was audible relief when the presentation ended.

Everyone trooped into another room for lunchtime drinks, at which point Mr Swinson announced that no alcohol would be served. Just as well, opined the reporters, otherwise a fracas of some sort could well have ensued.

John Willcock

Foreign Exchange Rates

Country	Spot	1 month	3 months	6 months	1 year
US	1.5548	84.5	85.5	86.5	87.5
Canada	24.970	35.34	32.54	31.58	30.58
Germany	2.4865	56.52	57.15	57.35	57.55
France	6.2443	78.157	490.458	520.23	523.36
Italy	2.7344	74.36	73.44	73.44	73.44
Japan	177.9	87.35	249.243	251.9	251.9
ECU	1.2201	20.17	56.51	59.14	64.45
Belgium	50.80	14.10	36.31	31.71	25.13
Netherlands	2.3330	195.19	537.441	588.93	599.79
Denmark	9.3344	74.36	73.44	73.44	73.44
Sweden	1.0487	11.5	32.22	62.27	41.18
Switzerland	2.0056	79.71	72.307	72.307	72.307
Australia	2.0024	35.20	35.45	35.45	35.45
Hong Kong	2.2584	810.20	880.430	772.22	772.22
Malaysia	2.2292	74.82	210.223	143.50	54.58
New Zealand	2.2292	74.82	210.223	143.50	54.58
Saudi Arabia	2.2292	74.82	210.223	143.50	54.58
Singapore	2.2292	74.82	210.223	143.50	54.58

Other Spot Rates

Country	Sterling	Dollar
Argentina	156.48	109.99
Austria	17.415	13.265
Brazil	126.46	10.525
China	13.515	8.2575
Egypt	5.9554	3.4051
Finland	7.2841	4.5256
Greece	270.57	70.510
India	55.330	36.750
Kuwait	4.781	3.0304

Forward rates quoted low to high are at a discount; subtract from spot rate. Rate quoted low to high is at a premium; add to spot rate. Dollar rates quoted as responses to £1. For the latest foreign exchange rates call 0811 321 3333. Calls cost 30p per minute (cheap rates) 48p other times.

Interest Rates

UK	5.75%	Germany	2.50%	Japan	8.75%	Belgium	5.00%
Base	5.75%	Discount	2.50%	Discount	8.75%	Discount	5.00%
Lombard	5.75%	Discount	2.50%	Discount	8.75%	Discount	5.00%
Intervention	3.55%	Canada	5.50%	Spain	5.50%	Central	3.00%
Prime	5.50%	Discount	5.00%	10-Day Repo	8.75%	Switzerland	5.00%
Discount	8.50%	Discount	5.00%	Netherlands	4.00%	Lombard	4.00%
Advance	2.50%	Discount	3.25%	Repo (Avg)	4.00%	Lombard	4.00%

Bond Yields

Country	5y	10y	15y	20y	30y
UK	7.7%	7.7%	7.7%	7.7%	7.7%
US	6.1%	6.3%	6.9%	6.0%	5.4%
Germany	5.8%	5.8%	5.8%	5.8%	5.8%
France	5.1%	5.0%	5.2%	5.0%	5.0%

Money Market Rates

Overnight	7 Day	1 Month	3 Months	6 Months	1 Year
Interbank	5.75%	5.75%	5.75%	5.75%	5.75%
Bankers' Acceptance	5.75%	5.75%	5.75%	5.75%	5.75%
Commercial Paper	5.75%	5.75%	5.75%	5.75%	5.75%
Repo	5.75%	5.75%	5.75%	5.75%	5.75%

Tourist Rates

Country	£/US\$	£/DM	£/¥
Australia	1.9428	1.9428	1.9428
Canada	0.6800	0.6800	0.6800
France	6.5596	6.5596	6.5596
Germany	2.3636	2.3636	2.3636
Italy	2.3636	2.3636	2.3636
Japan	163.89	163.89	163.89
Switzerland	2.0037	2.0037	2.0037
USA	1.5548	1.5548	1.5548

Life Financial Futures

Contract	Settlement price	High/Low	Open	Close
Long 100	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Short 100	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Long 100	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Short 100	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Life FTSE Index Option

Settlement price	4022.00	Settlement price	4022.00
Call	4022.00	Call	4022.00
Put	4022.00	Put	4022.00

Energy

Contract	Settlement price	High/Low	Open	Close
Long 100	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Short 100	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Commodity Indices

Index	Settlement price	High/Low	Open	Close
Long 100	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Short 100	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Latest Unit Trust Prices

Stock	Sell	Buy	Ytd	Stock	Sell	Buy	Ytd	Stock	Sell	Buy	Ytd	Stock	Sell	Buy	Ytd
Alfa Equity & Low Unit Trust Managers	155.48	155.48	155.48	Alfa Equity & Low Unit Trust Managers	155.48	155.48	155.48	Alfa Equity & Low Unit Trust Managers	155.48	155.48	155.48	Alfa Equity & Low Unit Trust Managers	155.48	155.48	155.48
Alfa Equity & Low Unit Trust Managers	155.48	155.48	155.48	Alfa Equity & Low Unit Trust Managers	155.48	155.48	155.48	Alfa Equity & Low Unit Trust Managers	155.48	155.48	155.48	Alfa Equity & Low Unit Trust Managers	155.48	155.48	155.48
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Alfa Equity & Low Unit Trust Managers	155.48	155.48	155.48	Alfa Equity & Low Unit Trust Managers	155.48	155.48	155.48	Alfa Equity & Low Unit Trust Managers	155.48	155.48	155.48	Alfa Equity & Low Unit Trust Managers	155.48	155.48	155.48

sport

In any case, the romantic perception of the Charltons as footballing brothers in arms has gone for ever

Going back further in time than it is comfortable to remember I used to find it strange that Jack and Bobby Charlton were not drawn to each other in the way you expect brothers to be. They are different, that's for sure, but variance in personality did not fully explain why they spent very little time together.

After all, they were from a close-knit working class family, and added to its remarkable prowess at football by sharing in England's 1966 World Cup victory, falling into a tearful embrace at the final whistle. "We don't live in each other's pockets," Jack would grunt when questions about their relationship were put to him.

Later on it became clear that there was something deeper, some-

thing troublesome that both were determined to avoid in conversation. This can happen in families and the discreet thing was to let them get on with it. From time to time people in this trade asked if there was any substance to rumours that the Charltons had grown apart. "Not to my knowledge," I would reply as a small means of protecting their privacy.

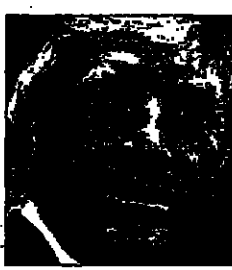
It all came into the open last week when the *Daily Mail* began serialising Jack Charlton's forthcoming autobiography dissection. Jack's complaint that Bobby, his late mother's favourite, seldom bothered to visit her or show concern about her failing health. "I'll run my life the way I want to," Bobby is quoted as saying.

A baffling thing is why Jack chose

to go public. Was the decision influenced by his publishers or did he simply want to put the record straight? In any case, the romantic perception of the Charltons as footballing brothers in arms has gone for ever.

I know Bobby fairly well but I know Jack better. Over the years we have formed what I like to think of as a friendship which makes the writing of this piece extremely difficult.

Compensations one year, long ago, on a coaching course at Lilleshall, we wondered what the future held for us. Jack was revealing an excellent mind for the game, but things at Leeds were not to his liking. Constantly at odds with the training staff who considered his natural stubbornness to be disruptive, his play-



KEN JONES

ing career was in limbo. "Don't know what it will lead to, where I'll end up," I remember him saying. All changed when Jack became reconciled with Don Revie, and went on to break through as a considerable international defender.

Importantly, fame didn't change him. Cussed was always the word that sprang quickest to mind in description and cussed he remains. Recalling their days together at Leeds, the former Republic of Ireland international John Giles said: "Jack wasn't always right but he was never wrong, which sums him up perfectly."

To suggest that envy on Jack's part caused the rift with Bobby is absolute nonsense. Even before his own career took off, Jack went around expressing pride in his younger brother's achievements. Later he would say: "When you think about the greatest players in history you have to include 'our kid' among them."

In a book we did together 12 years ago, Bobby told of his journey

home after being released from hospital following the awful Munich air disaster in 1958. "When I'd recovered sufficiently to travel by train, Jack met me in London and drove me to Ashington where I was to spend a week or two. He didn't say very much and there were long silences. But I felt very close to him then."

Time did the relationship no favours. "Haven't spoken to him for ages," Jack would say when his brother's name cropped up in passing. "But it's no big deal. Ever since we left home we've gone our separate ways and playing together for England, a terrific thing for our parents, especially our mother, didn't make any difference."

Alf Ramsey was aware of the dis-

tance between them, so was Neil Phillips who served as England's medical officer at the 1970 World Cup in Mexico and brought Jack into football management when vice chairman of Middlesbrough. "I'm very fond of them both, think of them as friends," he said, "but there was always something about their relationship you could never put a finger on."

That Bobby became an establishment figure, a director of Manchester United, and earned a knighthood, does not enter the equation. Fused further by the remarkable feat he performed as the Republic of Ireland's manager, Jack has simply followed the course that most suited him. The sad thing is that they are probably beyond reconciliation.

Back to business for Woosnam

Golf

ANDY FARRELL
reports from Wentworth

There are draws, and then there are World Match Play Championship draws. The event, in its 33rd consecutive year and the sixth under the sponsorship of Toyota, did not get where it is today without making some careful arrangements along the way.

By this evening, the British representation at Wentworth will be down by 50 per cent. Scotland's Colin Montgomerie, the European No 1, plays Ian Woosnam - the man he beat to take the crown this season - in the feature match of the first round.

"The initial reaction was one of surprise," Montgomerie said. He knows better than that. "It's a shame, but it will be good for TV and the crowd."

"Honestly, both of us think it is a bit silly doing it," Woosnam added. "It would have been nice to have a chance to play each other in the final. They say it guarantees a home player playing on Friday, but I don't agree."

While Montgomerie was beaten three times out of three at the Alfred Dunhill Cup last week in St Andrews, Woosnam had the week off to rest his ailing back. Those problems helped hand the Order of Merit title to Montgomerie.

"I feel better after the rest," Woosnam said. "It's my legs that are aching now because of the back. They feel tired and I am getting cramp. It is like I'm walking uphill all the time."

As Montgomerie has recognised, the Welshman is usually careful to get his excuses in first, but the physio van has been primed for a possible visit after he has hit a few balls in the morning and he has already booked a table for lunch. Surgery, something Woosnam - who suffers from the deterioration of vertebrae in his back

have to be sooner rather than later. "I feel like I am suffering all the time and, long term, I want to keep on playing."

Big Monty and wee Woosie have not met before in straight matchplay. "We know each other's games well and how we react under pressure," Montgomerie said. "I am looking forward to the challenge of playing him. I hit the ball straight and that is a key around here."

The Scot's record is good around the West Course, but he has yet to win either the Volvo PGA Championship or the World Match Play, although he lost in the final to Ernie Els in 1994.

Even if he should head for home defeated tomorrow - and he is the only one of the 12 players able to stay at home this week - his £30,000 prize-money will take him past £5m career earnings in Europe.

Woosnam, twice a winner here, became the first home champion in 1987, when he came through from the opening day. Only Corey Pavin in 1993 has achieved that feat since. "I don't agree that four of the 12 players get a day off," Montgomerie said. "But then I've never been seeded here."

His fitness training and dieting from earlier in the year may help if he is to play all eight rounds needed to win the event. "I don't feel my fitness let me down against Ernie in '94, but I played my best golf on the third day."

"It is a big advantage not to play until Friday," Els, the top seed and winner here for the past two years, said. The West Course is in superb condition

and playing as long as ever, but it suits the South African's aggressive nature in this format. No one has won the event three times in a row, but Els, 27 today, should one day challenge Gary Player and Seve Ballesteros' record of five titles. Although perennial favourites such

as the Spaniard, the Masters champion, Nick Faldo - who has a conflicting commitment in Japan - Greg Norman, Bernhard Langer, et al are not here, the line-up is still strong.

The American presence is particularly strong, with the top five on the US money list all here. The Major winners - Tom Lehman, Steve Jones and Mark Brooks - are the other seeds, but the winning American trio from St Andrews, Mark O'Meara, Phil Mickelson and Steve Stricker, all play today.

Stricker, who has been drawn against last year's runner-up,

Steve Elkington, with the winner to play Els, won all his five matches at St Andrews but was brought down to earth with a bump on Tuesday evening. Playing on Wentworth's par-three course, the honours went to his wife and caddy, Nicki Stricker, with a 27 to a 28.

Pete Sampras breezed past the Canadian doubles specialist Grant Connell 6-4, 6-2 yesterday in his opening Silver Group match of the Hong Kong Championships. The second-seeded Austrian Thomas Muster also got off to a winning start, defeating the South African Neville Godwin 6-4, 3-6, 6-4 in the Gold Group.

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SPORT

DAMON HILL: 'I'm still flying. I haven't come down yet. I'm coming down in layers, day by day'

Page 28

Beardsley vows to make amends

Football

Peter Beardsley is used to taking the plaudits rather than the flak, but yesterday the Newcastle United captain owned up to the blunder that left his team walking an Uefa Cup tightrope and promised: "I'll put it right in a fortnight."

The 35-year-old's peerless passing had propelled Newcastle to the top of Premiership at Derby on Saturday, but on Tuesday night in Budapest Beardsley's sureness of touch deserted him at the worst time, as he gifted Kristian Lisztes the winner in Newcastle's 3-2 defeat against Ferencvaros.

Beardsley was quick, however, to come to terms with his inadvertent role in the match-winner. "I was to blame for the third goal and I've got to hold my hands up and admit I was at fault," Beardsley said. "There can be no excuses for what I did. I made a mistake and I know it. All I want now is the chance to make amends and put things right in the second leg."

While Beardsley's error was costly, at least he and his teammates returned from Hungary with the knowledge that the tie was still there for the winning.

When shocking lapses at the back let in Ferenc Horvath and Lisztes to give Ferencvaros a two-goal lead inside 17 minutes, the Tynesiders' European dream was looking in tatters. But Les Ferdinand hauled the Magpies back into the game when he converted Alan Shearer's cross, and Shearer himself then found the target for his fourth goal in a week to give Kevin Keegan's men the priceless asset of two away goals.

Ferdinand acknowledged the value of his ninth strike of the season. "It was a very important goal for me, and probably the most important I've scored since I came to the club," he said. "Certainly it made a big difference to us, and it might prove to be the one that keeps us in the competition. We knew we had to try to score an away goal, and luckily we got two when we needed them most."

It has now been three goals in three games in the Uefa Cup for Ferdinand this term, but the 6ft striker does not entirely agree with the suggestion that the European business is an easy proposition.

"I wouldn't say easy, but it's



Les Ferdinand finds a way through the Ferencvaros defence in Newcastle's 3-2 defeat in Budapest on Tuesday night

Photograph: Mike Egerton/Empics

been good for me so far, and I hope that continues," he said. "We made the sort of start you can't account for individual errors and we got really punished."

"When we were two down after 15 minutes it was looking pretty grim, but we managed to stick to our task rather than getting blown away. We always felt we could score goals, and we managed to pull it back, although after getting ourselves back in it we're disappointed that we didn't go on to win it."

Perhaps they would have

done if the Swedish referee, Leif Sundell, had not allowed the Ukrainian defender Sergei Kuznetsov to get away with a 90-minute display of wrestling and balking which left Alan Shearer angry and frustrated.

Shearer, whose mood was not helped by the last-minute offside flag that ruled out a perfectly legal equaliser, accused the defender of "being inside my shirt all night". Ferdinand, who received more than his own fair share of bruises from Janos Hrutka before picking up a caution, agreed with Shearer, com-

plaining that the officials had not applied the laws consistently.

"He booked one of them early on, but I think he lost his bottle a bit after that and decided he wasn't going to send anybody off. It didn't help when Alan's goal was disallowed at the end. He couldn't have been offside, because Rob Lee pulled it back, so there's no chance he was."

"But it was given and now we've got a big test back at St James' in a fortnight. The good thing is that with the two away goals we know a 1-0 win, or even 2-1, will get us through. I think

we all know that they'll come to Newcastle, put 11 men behind the ball and say 'come and beat us'. But we opened them up a few times and that gives us the belief that we can do it again and get it right next time."

If Newcastle think they have got problems advancing, then they should look at the dilemma Aberdeen have got themselves in after losing 2-0 at home to Brondby on Tuesday.

Yesterday, the Aberdeen assistant manager, Tommy Craig, conceded that the former Arsenal midfielder John Jensen

was right with his claim that Scottish sides are not skilful enough to succeed in Europe.

Jensen, now the midfield general of Brondby, branded the Dons as technically inept and insisted a change in style was necessary to beat the best of the Continent had to offer.

Craig, who is also the Scotland Under-21 manager, has argued as much for years but knows it will take a fundamental change in approach to make that a reality. "What annoys me about our result is that we have seen it all before. We flirted with

control but were never really in charge of the game. Brondby were teetering at stages and looked there for the taking but we lost bad goals just at the end of each half and paid the penalty," he said.

"Those wounds were self-inflicted and, although our boys showed honesty in looking for goals, there was a malady that went along with that. We proved our football is not suited to Europe and we need to get the fine balance right between playing at home and abroad."

More football, page 31

Jockey power calls off Haydock

Racing
GREG WOOD

Trainers, owners and punters were left angry and bewildered at Haydock Park yesterday when a wildest strike by 21 jockeys forced the stewards to abandon the card after just a single race. The riders, including Llanfranco Dettori, Pat Eddery and Walter Swinburn, felt that the track was unsafe, and refused to leave the weighing-room before the Syamore Nursery Handicap.

Swinburn described the ground as "atrocious" after riding in the first race, while Dettori said: "I don't think it's safe and all my colleagues agree with me." The jockeys were particularly concerned that horses might slip on the turn into the straight, but when the stewards inspected the course as a result of their complaints, they decided that the card should continue. When the jockeys still refused to ride, abandonment was the only option.

Gary Hind, who was due to ride Sparkling Harry, was happy to go along with the word of the senior riders. "As soon as those who went out reported back to us we decided that we should all stick together and not race. I haven't had a good season and this was my only ride today. We all wanted to ride but if it's unsafe why go out there and take the risk?"

But the jockeys' actions, or inaction, did not please everybody. "I have never known anything like this," Bill Nunneley, the stewards' secretary, said. "There was nothing more we could do. We will submit a confidential report to the Jockey Club and it is up to them to take the matter further."

Anthony Cann, whose father owned a runner in the nursery, echoed Nunneley's frustration. "It's just mob rule," he said. "These jockeys are getting footballers, they are just too big for their boots."

Since many of the jockeys travelled a long way to ride Haydock and were giving up a chance of remuneration, it is assumed that their conduct was genuine. Their decision may yet prove more costly, however. The only recent precedent for yesterday's events was in July 1989, when 11 jockeys, including Swinburn, refused to ride at Beverley. They were later fined between £250 and £750.

However, John Maxse, a Jockey Club spokesman, said: "It wouldn't be fair to compare that incident with this one. We've not had the report from Haydock yet so we don't know what is going to happen."

Racing, page 28

League warns players' union against striking

The Professional Footballers' Association have been accused of manufacturing a show of strength that could throw the Football League season into strike chaos.

Pat Nevin, the PFA's chairman, fired the opening shots as the deadline for a ballot to take industrial action passed at lunchtime yesterday, but the Scotland and Tranmere winger was met by an instant riposte

from angry League officials, who claim the union's unbending stance over television cash is an act of brinkmanship that could backfire on the players.

"The outcome of the ballot is entirely predictable," the League spokesman, Chris Hull, said. "The players, as an act of blind faith, will give the PFA a mandate to take industrial action. But we feel that the announcement of the result of the

ballot on Saturday will be utilised by the PFA as a public relations exercise. They want to flex their muscles and, as a result, the issue will be turned into a media circus."

"But the PFA should also be aware of the consequences of persisting with this line of action because it could prove harmful for many of their members. And although the PFA will be given their mandate, whether they in-

tend to use it is another matter." Union leaders expect to be given overwhelming support by their members as they look to secure the 10 per cent levy that has been traditionally paid to them from cash generated by television screening rights.

The League have countered that the old agreement is archaic in light of the recent £25m deal struck with Sky TV.

With the chief executive, Gor-

don Taylor, and his deputy, Brendon Batson, at a meeting of European football unions' in Athens, it was left to Nevin to defend the PFA's stance during an interview on BBC Radio 5 Live.

"A few weeks ago the Football League decided to renege on the 10 per cent deal. That money goes into things like the education fund, benevolent fund and insurance

fund," Nevin said. "Last time we had a ballot five years ago on the Premier League, or Division One as it was then, we had over 90 per cent backing. The players generally trust the union."

He added that the League had made no moves to accommodate the players' demands. "As soon as we get the mandate, the Football League will realise that we are not playing games

any more. The brinkmanship has been taken right to the end."

The League have declared their intention to seek an injunction blocking strike action, insisting players would be contravening industrial legislation.

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3120, Thursday 17 October By Mass Wednesday's solution

ACROSS

- Don once more supplies the remedy (7)
- Speeded round lake and made waves (7)
- Revolution reported by the dailies? (8,7)
- Polish (and reportedly female) name (5)
- A deal of unity (9)
- 'Right' moralist's cut by 1 sleazy English (9)
- Cry from leader of war band (5)
- A little beast - your setter, that is! (5)
- Put faction to rest and cross over? (9)
- Level trees cultivated round Royal garden areas (9)

DOWN

- 'Rock' - or a lighter piece (5)
- Agent, Bond, cracked cipher ultimately (9,6)
- Brackets 'the little man' with social groups? (7)
- State gets unruly type turned away (7)
- Unwinds with excess drink (5,2)
- Nasty creepings inside are an increasing problem (9,6)
- Dear's preoccupied after letter (9)
- Purgative girl's brought up (5)
- Frequent note, with tenor (9)

Answers to Wednesday's crossword:

- TRICK
- WAVE
- REVOLUTION
- POLE
- UNITY
- RIGHT
- CRY
- BEAST
- PUT
- LEVEL
- ROCK
- AGENT
- BRACKET
- STATE
- UNWIND
- NASTY
- DEAR
- PURGATIVE
- FREQUENT

Injured Baia rated doubtful for Barcelona

Barcelona, resigned to losing their Brazilian striker Ronaldo for tonight's Cup-Winners' Cup tie against Red Star Belgrade, now have a goalkeeper crisis on their hands.

The Portuguese international Vitor Baia pulled up in training with a ligament strain in his right knee and is doubtful for the first-leg match at Nou Camp.

The second-choice goalkeeper, Julien Lopetegui, is also injured and on Monday the reserve goalkeeper, Mariano Angoy, quit the club to play American football for the Barcelona Dragons.

As a result, 29-year-old Carlos Busquets is set for an unexpected comeback to Barcelona's first team. Busquets was a regular under the former manager, Johan Cruyff, but when Bobby Robson took over at the Catalan club, bringing Baia with him from Porto, the Spaniard slithered down the ranks into the third team. If he plays it will be his first top-level appearance since Robson and Baia arrived in the summer.

At the other end of the pitch, the Spanish international striker Juan Pizzi is set to replace Ronaldo, who misses the clash with the Yugoslavs because of a Brazilian friendly which has also deprived the holders, Paris St-Germain, and Portugal's Benfica of their first-choice strikers.

PSG will be without Leonardo, whose seven goals to date have helped them to build a commanding lead in the French league, for their first-round tie in Turkey against Galatasaray.

"We'll surely miss him," the Brazilian's fellow midfielder Vincent Guerin said. "But I

think we have enough good players to manage without him."

Laurent Fournier will probably move forward into Leonardo's attacking midfield role, with Jose Cobos coming into the defence at left-back.

PSG are expecting a tough game in Istanbul's Ali Sami Yen stadium, in stark contrast to their first-round tie against Vaduz of Liechtenstein, whom they beat 7-0 on aggregate.

The Benfica striker Osmar Donizete - like Ronaldo, the top scorer in his league - missed the Portuguese side's second-round tie against Lokomotiv Moscow to play for his country. But the Benfica coach, Paulo Antunes, is unperturbed, saying: "Someone else will take his place and know what to do."

Florentina, the winners of the first Cup-Winners' Cup final in 1961, are confident of overwhelming Sparta Prague in their first leg in Florence. The Italians have taken only five points from their five Serie A games to date but their captain, Gabriel Batistuta, believes his side are about to recover their form.

"I feel I can make a promise to the fans - Florentina and Batistuta are just about to take off and the worst is behind us now," the inspirational Argentinian forward said. Batistuta missed a penalty in Saturday's 0-0 home draw with Lazio and says he has a debt to repay to Florentina's fans. "If we get a penalty against Sparta, I'll take it," he said.

The Nigerian striker Nwankwo Kanu will have heart surgery in the United States next month. The 20-year-old

internationale forward had chosen a specialist clinic in Cleveland, Ohio, for the operation, which would be carried out in the next two to three weeks.

The Milan club, who bought Kanu from Ajax this season, had no immediate comment on the report. The newspaper said Kanu had visited specialists in London, Amsterdam and the United States, who had confirmed the findings of Italian cardiologists that he was suffering from a "valvular insufficiency of the aorta."

Kanu helped Nigeria to Olympic gold in Atlanta and won the European Cup with Ajax in 1995. He has vowed to overcome his heart problem, which doctors say may mean he will never play again. "I'll fight to the end before giving up," Kanu said last month.

The player's problem was diagnosed in medical tests at Internazionale after he had moved from Ajax, raising doubts over the validity of the transfer deal. La Gazzetta said Fifa, the world governing body, had written to the two clubs urging them to come to an amicable solution.

The Australia coach, Eddie Thomson, has quit to take up a £260,000-a-year job as head coach with the Japanese J-League side Sanfrecce Hiroshima. Thomson will take up his new post early next year.

Australia's Olympic coach, Raul Blanco, will take over as acting national coach. Thomson was cleared in June last year of corruption by a parliamentary inquiry into overseas transfers of Australian players.

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